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THE WORKS

OF

BISHOP SHERLOCK.

VOL IV.

T/1938.

THE WORKS

OF

BISHOP SHERLOCK.

WITH

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE,

SUMMARY OF EACH DISCOURSE, NOTES, &c.

BY THE REV. T. S. HUGHES, B. D.

VOL. IV.

LONDON:

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AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

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A SERIES OF THE MOST ESTEEMED

DIVINES

OF THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

WITH

A LIFE OF EACH AUTHOR,

A SUMMARY OF EACH SERMON OR DISCOURSE, NOTES, &c.

BY THE REV. T. S. HUGHES, B.D.

OF EMMANUEL COLLEGE; EXAMINING CHAPLAIN TO THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH, AND LATE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

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THE

USE AND INTENT OF PROPHECY

IN THE

SEVERAL AGES OF THE WORLD.

IN SIX DISCOURSES,

DELIVERED AT THE TEMPLE CHURCH IN APRIL AND MAY, 1724.

PUBLISHED AT THE DESIRE OF, AND DEDICATED TO, THE MASTERS OF THE TWO HONORABLE SOCIETIES OF THE TEMPLE.

PREFACE.

THAT the reader may not be deceived, it is proper to tell him here that he is not to expect in the following Discourses an answer to a book lately published, intitled, 'Grounds and Reasons,' &c.: that work was undertaken, and has been discharged to the satisfaction of the public by a much abler hand. When I entered on the design of forming these Discourses, it was with a view of showing the use and intent of prophecy in the several ages of the world, and the manifest connexion between the prophecies of every age. They who consider the prophecies under the Old Testament as so many predictions only, independent of each other, can never form a right judgment of the argument for the truth of Christianity drawn from this topic; nor be able to satisfy themselves, when they are confronted with the objections of unbelievers. It is an easy matter for men of leisure and tolerable parts to find difficulties in particular predictions, and in the application of them made by writers who lived many hundred years ago, and who had many ancient books and records of the Jewish church, from which they drew many passages, and perhaps some prophecies; which books and records we have not to enable us to understand and to justify their applications. But it is not so easy a matter to show, or to persuade the world to believe, that a chain of prophecies, reaching through several thousand years, delivered at different times, yet manifestly subservient to one and the same administration of Providence from beginning to end, is the effect of art and contrivance, and religious fraud; that for so many ages successively proper persons should be found to carry on the cheat, and that none of them should have any interest to serve by betraying the secret, or so much honesty and regard to truth as to discover it.

The account given in the fourth Discourse, of the remission of the curse on the ground, by covenant with Noah and his posterity, may be treated perhaps as the effect of mere fancy and imagination; for there are many prejudices which lie in its way. All that I shall say more on that subject is only this: if you allow the account, it carries on the series of God's dispensations towards mankind in a natural gradation, and opens a new scene of Providence, where there seems to be great reason to expect one, at the beginning of the new world: if you reject this account, there seems to be a great gap in the sacred history, and the new world sets out just where the old one left off; and yet who would not expect that so great a change should be attended with some new degree of light, to comfort and support the poor remains of mankind? If the notion is not approved, it is at least an innocent one; and I am not so fond of it as to enter farther into the defence of it.

As to the Dissertations which I have added, the relation they have to the subject of the Discourses will appear to those who think them worth the reading; and there is no reason to trouble others with any account of them.

DISCOURSES

ON THE

USE AND INTENT OF PROPHECY.

SUMMARY OF DISCOURSE I.

II PETER, CHAP. I.—VERSE 19.

EVIDENT comparison in the text between *the word of prophecy*, and something before mentioned or intended. At the 16th verse the Apostle says, *We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* And after thus disclaiming all art and deceit in setting forth the promises of the gospel, he declares on what evidence and authority he had raised such expectations in them: *but* (we) *were eye-witnesses of his majesty*, &c. *And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.* Immediately follow the words of the text, *We have also a more sure word of prophecy.*

We see then on what foundation the inference of a sceptical writer stands, who asserts that "prophecy is a stronger argument than a miracle, which depends on external evidence and testimony." Interpreters differ much in expounding the pas-

sage, but all agree in rejecting this sense, which gives to prophecy a superiority over other evidence by which the truth of the gospel is confirmed. It is shown that the text, so interpreted, not only contradicts the general sense of mankind on this subject, but is inconsistent with itself and many other places of Scripture. Consider, if any prophet can give greater proof of his divine mission than the power of working miracles. When Gideon is called by the angel of the Lord to the deliverance of Israel, and a prophecy is delivered to encourage him, he demands a miraculous sign: such a one is given him, and he undertakes the work, to which he is again encouraged by two miracles wrought at his request. In this case was the word of prophecy more sure before the miracles than after? If so, why was a sign desired? and when desired, why was it granted? Does God work miracles to humor men in their folly, or to confirm their faith? A still higher instance adduced in the case of Moses.

But farther; the comparison in the text is between the *word of prophecy* and the *immediate word* of God; accordingly St. Peter, by this interpreter, is made in his own person to say, that the dark prophecies of the Old Testament were a surer evidence than the immediate voice of God. But let the account which St. Peter himself gives of this *word of prophecy* be considered. He compares it to *a light shining in a dark place;* and distinguishes it from *day-light*, and from that brightness which is ushered in by the *day-star:* it is but as the glimmering of a candle in a dark night seen at a distance, which, though it gives some direction, is nothing when compared to clear day-light. This is a choice account to give of the best evidence for that gospel which was to *lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of the people of Israel.* Ask St. Paul what state Christians are in, and he will tell you *that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, has shone unto them.* Ask the Evangelists; and they will answer

that *the day-spring from on high has visited us*, &c.: this point enlarged on.

But let us go one step farther, and we shall find that St. Peter in the text is so far from speaking of the *word of prophecy* as of the *best* light or evidence to be had for the point in question, that he manifestly speaks of it as *not the best*, but as a light to be attended to only till a better comes; *until the day dawn, and the day-star arise:* this point enlarged on.

Such reasons as these probably prevailed with interpreters to quit the apparent sense of this text; but they are far from being agreed in the establishment of any other. The Greek expositors suppose that prophecy is *now to Christians* a more sure evidence than ever it was, having been verified and established by events; which interpretation preserves the force of the comparison, but places it where St. Peter has not placed it: this shown.

Others suppose that the comparative is here used in the sense of the positive, to denote the great certainty of the evidence; but this introduces a new use of language into the text without sufficient authority.

Others, preserving the natural signification of the words, and admitting the comparison, will not allow it to be *absolute*, but only *relative*, that is, to the opinions and prejudices of the Jews, to whom this epistle was directed: this shown not to be the Apostle's meaning.

These are the most considerable expositions of the text: it appears that every interpreter has been sensible of the absurdity of setting up prophecy as superior to all other gospel evidence, and to avoid this difficulty, has been driven to seek out another meaning. Yet the words do certainly import that the evidence of prophecy is a *surer* evidence than that before mentioned; which was the Apostle's own testimony of the glory of Christ, which he had seen with his eyes; and of the voice of God declaring Christ to be his beloved Son, of which

St. Peter was an ear-witness on the mount. Yet we are not hence to conclude that prophecy is better than all other evidence of the mission of Christ and of the truth of the gospel; since it is neither of these to which the text refers. To clear this matter, let us consider what the Apostle intended to prove.

The second epistle of St. Peter was written to support the hopes and expectations which he had raised in his first. The Christians to whom this was written were in a state of severe trial and persecution: (see ch. i. 6. ii. 12. iii. 16. iv. 4. 14. &c.) wherefore the Apostle administers suitable advice to them, and bids them account it a happiness that they were reproached for the name of Christ: (see ch. iv. 1. 13. 14.) He reminds them that this was no strange event, but what they had reason to expect; as it had been foretold, &c. (see ch. iv. 12. 17. v. 9.) Together with these admonitions he gives them assurance of a certain deliverance near at hand. He tells them that they *were kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed:* i. 5. He bids them have perfect hope and confidence in this deliverance (13.); and for the certainty of it he appeals to the ancient prophets, and *the spirit of Christ in them*, &c. (i. 11. 12.) The first scene, the sufferings of Christ, being over, (iv. 1.) his glory was ready to be revealed, which would bring to them *exceeding joy*, and *to the ungodly*, their persecutors, destruction, (iv. 13. 18.) All these hopes were founded in this; that Christ had already received glory and power, and would return in that glory and power to save true believers. Now it is very probable that the persecuted Christians of those times looked daily for this deliverance; but when one year after another passed, and no deliverance came; when the scoffers began to mock them and ask, *where is the promise of his coming?* (2 Ep. iii. 3. 4.) their hearts grew sick, and hope deferred became an additional grief; filling them with fear lest they had believed in vain:

whence many gave way, listened to corrupt teachers, *fell from their steadfastness*, and, to avoid suffering, *denied the Lord that bought them:* (2 Ep. iii. 17. 1.)

In this state of things, after an interval of five or six years, the Apostle sends his second epistle; and it answers in every point to this account. He endeavors, in the first chapter, to re-establish their hopes: in the second he notices the false teachers, and threatens them with *swift destruction:* in the third he considers the scoffers and their irreligious insult, entering into their argument, and showing, from what had already happened in the world, how perversely they reasoned about future things. He concludes with proper cautions to Christians respecting the times and seasons of God's judgments, and guards not only his own, but St. Paul's doctrine, on this article, viz. *the coming of Christ*, against the arguments of the unlearned and unstable.

This then is the main point of the second epistle; and St. Peter himself tells us that his intention in both his epistles was, to make them to whom they were sent, *mindful of the words which were spoken before of the holy prophets;* adding also, *and of the commandments of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour:* 2 Ep. iii. 1. 2. This key will open this so much perplexed passage of Scripture; from which it is evident that the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is the only point here in question; and that not a word relates to any other fact or doctrine of the gospel. To prove this point, the Apostle declares that he had himself been an eye-witness of his majesty and glory. But this evidence is not sufficient. What is there to prove his future coming again in this power and glory? There is a great presumption that he will so come, in that the Apostle saw him glorified, and God openly declared him to be his *well-beloved Son:* but to assure us that he will indeed so come and use his power, it is said, *We have a more sure word of prophecy.* This interpretation is

shown to be necessary to the Apostle's argument, plainly enforced by the context, and to stand clear of all difficulties. The *more sure word of prophecy* here mentioned is shown to refer not only to the prophecies of the Old, but also to those of the New Testament. The above interpretation of the passage furnishes an answer to one objection, stated by the learned Grotius, against the authority of the epistle.

DISCOURSE I.

II PETER, CHAP. I.—VERSE 19.

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.

THERE being evidently a comparison in the text between the 'word of prophecy,' and something before mentioned or intended, it is necessary to look back to see how the relation stands, and what the thing is to which the 'word of prophecy' is compared and preferred. At the 16th verse the Apostle says, 'We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' And after thus disclaiming all art and deceit in setting forth the promises and expectations of the gospel, he proceeds to declare on what evidence and authority he had raised such expectations in them: 'But (we) were eye-witnesses of his majesty, for he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.' Immediately follow the words of the text, 'We have also a more sure word of prophecy.'

You see on what foundation their inference stands, who assert that the evidence which Christians have from prophecy for the certainty of their hopes and expectations, compared with the evidence they have from the preaching of the Apostles, who were eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of what they report concerning the majesty of Christ, is the greater and surer evi-

dence; or, in the words of a late author,* that "prophecy is a stronger argument than a miracle, which depends on external evidence and testimony." This author has taken great pains to show that the argument from prophecy for the truths of Christianity, as managed and applied by the writers of the New Testament, is absurd and ridiculous; and that we may not flatter ourselves with hopes of assistance from other arguments, he gives us this text of St. Peter, to show, by the authority of our own Scriptures, that prophecy, as bad an argument as it is, is nevertheless the very best that our cause affords: but his views be to himself; what truth there is in his exposition and application of this part of Scripture we shall soon see.

Interpreters differ very much in expounding this passage; but all, as far as I see, agree in rejecting this sense, which gives a superiority to the evidence of prophecy above all other evidence by which the truth of the gospel is confirmed; and indeed the text expounded to this meaning contradicts not only the general sense of mankind on this subject, but will be found likewise inconsistent with itself and many other places of Scripture. For, first, let any man consider, and say on what proof and evidence the authority of prophecy itself depends: can any prophet give greater proof of his divine mission than the power of working miracles? And if this be the last and the greatest proof he can give of his being sent by God, can the evidence of prophecy ever rise higher than the evidence of miracles, on which it ultimately depends for all its authority? When Gideon was called to the deliverance of Israel, the angel of the Lord came and said unto him, 'The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor;—go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites; have not I sent thee?' Here now was a prophecy delivered by the angel of the Lord to encourage his undertaking. What says Gideon to this? He desires a sign: 'If now I have found favor in thy sight, then show me a sign that thou talkest with me.' A sign is given him, a miraculous sign; he is satisfied, and undertakes the work appointed; to which he is again encouraged by two miracles

* 'A Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion:' 1724. p. 27.

wrought at his request: Judges vii. What think you now? The prophecy delivered by the angel was as much a prophecy before as it was after miracles wrought in confirmation of it; but was the word of prophecy more sure before the miracles than after? If so, why was a sign desired? and, when desired, why was it granted? Does God work miracles to humor men in their folly? or is it to confirm their faith? If it be to confirm their faith, then our faith in the prophets depends on the authority of miracles; and since the stream can never rise above the spring-head, the evidence of prophecy cannot be greater than the evidence of miracles. But let us take a higher instance: Moses was the first and the greatest prophet of the law, to whom God spoke 'face to face:' he was called by God to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt, and commissioned to assure them of God's immediate protection. This, I suppose, was sufficient to make him a prophet to Israel: but what says Moses? 'Behold they will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice; or they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee.' Was this a foolish complaint in Moses? If it was, how came God to listen to it, and to furnish him with an answer above all exception, by giving him immediately a power to work miracles in confirmation of his prophecy? Does not this method of God's proceeding plainly show that miracles are the prophet's greatest authority and confirmation? What is that superior evidence of prophecy then, which is said so much to exceed the evidence of miracles? But to go on: the comparison in the text, with respect to St. Peter himself, is between the 'word of prophecy' and the *immediate* word of God; and according to this exposition of the text, St. Peter, who declares that he heard the voice of God *himself* in the mount, is made in his OWN person to say, (for the words are, 'WE have a more sure word of prophecy,') that the dark prophecies of the Old Testament were a surer and more certain evidence than this immediate voice of God which he heard with his own ears. Now what is prophecy, that it should be more surely and certainly to be depended on than the immediate voice of God? Is it possible to think that St. Peter, or any man in his wits, could make such a comparison?

But farther, let us consider what account St. Peter himself

gives of this 'word of prophecy;' which we are told is beyond comparison the best and the surest evidence we have for our faith. He compares it to 'a light shining in a dark place,' and distinguishes it from day-light, and that brightness which is ushered in by the day-star. This 'word of prophecy,' then, is here compared by St. Peter to the glimmering light of a candle seen at a distance in a dark night; which, though it gives some direction, yet is nothing compared to clear day-light. Is not this now a choice account of the evidence of the gospel? nay, of the very best evidence which we have of the gospel? Are we still surrounded on all sides with darkness, assisted by one only distant glimmering light? Was it thus that Christ came to be 'a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of Israel?' St. Peter, in his first epistle, tells all Christians that they 'are called out of darkness into God's marvellous light;' how comes he then in this second epistle to tell them that they are still in darkness, and have nothing but a light glimmering in the darkness to direct them? Can the same writer possibly be supposed to give such different accounts of our gospel-state? Ask St. Paul what state Christians are in: he will tell you 'that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, has shone unto them:' 2 Cor. iv. 4. Ask the Evangelists; they will tell you, 'the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death.' Ask any, or all of the Apostles; they will tell you their commission is 'to open the eyes of the people, and to turn them from darkness to light:' Acts xxvi. 16. agreeable to what our Lord told his disciples, 'Ye are the light of the world:' Matth. v. 14. How different is this account from that which St. Peter is supposed to give of the 'best light' we have under the gospel, in contradiction to himself, and almost every writer of the New Testament!

But let us go one step farther, and we shall find that St. Peter in the text is so far from speaking of the 'word of prophecy' as of the best light or evidence to be had for the point in question, whatever it was, that he manifestly speaks of it as not the best, but as a light to be attended to only until a better comes. Hear his words: 'We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as

unto a light that shineth in a dark place, UNTIL the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.' This light, you see, is to be attended to only till the day-light comes; so far is it from being itself the best light, that it must give way to a better. What the true import and meaning of this is we shall see hereafter. But surely St. Peter would not have limited any time for their attending to the word of prophecy, had he been considering it as the best support of Christian faith; for in that sense it ought ever to be attended to, and to be the constant employment of a Christian's meditation so long as life and thought remain with him.

These reasons, I suppose, prevailed with interpreters to quit the apparent sense of this text, which seems to prefer the authority of prophecy to the authority of all other evidence, whereby the doctrine of the gospel is confirmed; and to seek for some other more conformable to truth and reason. But however they are agreed in rejecting this sense, they are far from being agreed in establishing any other.

The Greek expositors suppose the sense here to be, the prophecy is 'now to Christians' a more sure and convincing evidence than ever it was, having been verified and established by the events. This interpretation preserves the force of the comparison; but then it places the comparison where St. Peter has not placed it. He manifestly compares the evidence of prophecy to the evidence arising from the glorification of Christ, attested by those who delivered what they had heard and seen with their own eyes and ears; but of the evidence and weight of prophecy *before* and *after* the completion he says nothing. Grotius thought this sense the most convenient, and has adopted it in his commentary on the place.

Others * suppose that the comparative is used in this text in the sense of the positive, to express the great certainty of the evidence mentioned. According to them, the meaning is, 'that we have a very sure evidence in the words of prophecy.' This exposition introduces a new use of language into the text, for which having no sufficient authority to produce, it can claim no authority itself. The instances given to support

* Erasmus, Junius, and Tremellius.

this construction, as far as I have seen, are not pertinently alleged.

Others, preserving the natural signification of the words, and therefore admitting the comparison, will not however allow the comparison to be absolute, but only relative; relative to the opinions and prejudices of the Jews, to whom this Epistle was directed. According to this interpretation, the Apostle does not assert that prophecy is in itself a better argument than the Evangelical evidence, but only that it is better to Jews; who, being educated in an esteem and reverence for the prophets from their childhood, and being but new and tender converts to the gospel, had a much greater regard to the authority of their own prophets than to the testimony of the Apostles. But as to this exposition, in the first place there is nothing in the text to countenance it; in the next place, had this been St. Peter's meaning, he never would have spoken in the first person, and joined himself in the same opinion with his countrymen: 'WE have,' says he, 'a more sure word of prophecy.' Now whatever the Jews thought, St. Peter could not think that the ancient obscure prophecies, and which he compares immediately to 'a light shining in a dark place,' were a stronger evidence than the miracles of Jesus, and the attestation of God himself to the truth of his mission. This therefore could not be St. Peter's meaning.

These are the most considerable expositions which have been given of this passage. It is evident that all interpreters have been sensible of the absurdity of setting up prophecy as a superior evidence to all other gospel evidence; and that to avoid this difficulty, they have been driven to seek out other meanings. And yet, without all question, the words of the text, according to their most natural sense, do import that the evidence of prophecy is a surer evidence than that before mentioned; which was the Apostle's own testimony of the glory of Christ, which he had seen with his eyes; and of the voice of God declaring Christ to be his beloved Son; of which the Apostle was an ear-witness in the mount. But as natural as this sense is, yet they who conclude from hence that prophecy is a better evidence of the mission of Christ and the truth of the gospel than any other evidence, draw a conclusion which

the text will not justify. For look back and see what is the thing to be proved by this more sure word of prophecy; is it the mission of Christ? St. Peter says nothing of it. Is it the truth of the gospel? Nothing less. The Apostle tell us, in the 16th verse, that God declared Christ by a voice from the excellent glory, to 'be his beloved Son;' but this is not the thing he would prove, for he brings this declaration to prove something else; and this declaration is considered as one of the proofs to which he compares the word of prophecy.

To clear this matter, let us consider what it is that St. Peter intended to prove; for without knowing this it is impossible to judge of the comparison in the text; for in some cases prophecy is no proof, in others it may be our very best evidence, notwithstanding that it is a glimmering light faintly shining through the dark.

The second epistle of St. Peter was written to support and maintain the hopes and expectations which he had raised in his first, as will be evident on a comparison of the two together. To the first epistle, therefore, we must go to see the foundation and rise of the matter to which this controverted text in the second relates.

The Christians, to whom the first epistle was directed, were in a state of severe trial and persecution; they were 'for a season in heaviness, through manifold temptations:' i. 6. 'they were spoken against as evil doers:' ii. 12. iii. 16. iv. 4. They 'suffered for righteousness sake:' iii. 14. they were 'reproached for the name of Christ:' iv. 14. and were 'made partakers of his sufferings:' verse 13. This being the case, the Apostle administers suitable advice to them: he calls on them to 'arm themselves with the same mind which was in Christ; who suffered for us in the flesh:' iv. 1. he bids them account it their happiness that 'they were reproached for the name of Christ:' iv. 14. and 'rejoice that they were partakers of his sufferings:' ver. 13. He reminds them that his 'fiery trial' was no strange or surprising event; but what had been foretold, and what they had reason to expect: iv. 12. and that 'the same afflictions were accomplished in their brethren in the world:' v. 9. that the time was come (foretold before) that 'judgment must begin at the house of God:' iv. 17.

Together with these admonitions he gives them assurance of a certain deliverance near at hand. He tells them they 'were kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed:' i. 5. that their trial would yield 'honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:' ver. 7. He bids them have perfect hope and confidence 'in the grace,' or deliverance, 'to be brought at the revelation of Christ Jesus:' ver. 13. 'in the day of visitation:' ii. 12. For the certainty of this deliverance, and 'salvation now ready (or prepared) to be revealed,' and of the share they should have in it, he appeals to the ancient prophets, and the 'spirit of Christ in them, testifying beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory which should follow:' i. 11. 'Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things now reported unto you:' ver. 12. The first scene, the sufferings of Christ, being over, iv. 1. his glory was ready to be revealed, which would bring them 'exceeding joy,' iv. 13. and be to the destruction of their persecutors, the ungodly and the sinners: ver. 18.

All these hopes were founded in this, that Christ himself had already received glory and power, and would return in his glory and power to save true believers. Our trust in God is by St. Peter built on this, that God 'raised him (Christ) from the dead, and gave him glory:' 1 Pet. i. 21. And it is at the revelation of this glory that Christians are taught to expect 'exceeding joy:' iv. 13. You see now how much weight is laid by St. Peter in his first epistle on the expectation of Christ's coming in the power and glory of God.

It is very probable that the distressed Christians conceived at first great hopes from these assurances given them by an Apostle of Christ, and expected (as it is natural for men in affliction to do) that every day would bring their deliverance with it. But when one year after another passed, and no deliverance came, when the scoffers began to ridicule their hopes, and asked in mockery, 'where is the promise of his coming?' 2 Pet. iii. 3. 4. their hearts grew sick; and their hopes deferred, instead of being any comfort or support to them, became an addition of grief, and filled them with fears and suspicions, lest they had believed in vain. Many of them, worn out with

distress and persecution, began to give way, and willingly listened to the corrupt teachers, who instructed them to keep fair with the world, and to keep their faith to themselves; by means of which wicked doctrine they were 'led away, and fell from their steadfastness:' 2 Ep. iii. 17. and to avoid suffering, 'denied the Lord that bought them:' iii. 1.

In this state of things, and at the distance of five or six years from the writing of the first epistle, the Apostle sends his second letter; and it answers in every point to this account. In the first chapter the Apostle endeavors to re-establish and confirm the hopes of believers; but he does it with the air of one who had been reproached for his doctrine; 'We have not,' says he, 'followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the POWER and COMING of the Lord Jesus:' ch. i. 16. You see here again the true point on which St. Peter placed the hopes and expectations of true believers. In the second chapter he takes notice of the 'false teachers who brought in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them;' these he threatens with 'swift destruction,' verse i. and tells them that, however they might conceive of the promise of Christ's speedy coming, yet they would assuredly find that 'their own judgment did not linger,' nor their own 'damnation slumber:' ver. 3. that it would 'have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them:' ver. 21. In the third and last chapter he considers the scoffers and their irreligious insult, 'where is the promise of his coming?' ver. 4. He enters into their argument, and shows them, from what had already happened in the world, how perversely they reasoned about future things. He concludes the whole with proper cautions to Christians, when they consider and endeavor to understand the times and seasons of God's judgments; and guards not only his own, but St. Paul's doctrine on this article, the coming of Christ, (so much was his mind bent to clear this one point,) against the perverse use of the unlearned and unstable: ver. 15. 16.

You see now what is the main, the only great point, in this second epistle; it is the coming of Christ in power and glory, to deliver the faithful, and to take vengeance of the ungodly

and unbelievers, as foretold by the prophets under both Testaments. But this coming of Christ was future, and at a distance, and depended intirely (as to any knowlege that could be had of it) on the authority of prophecy; for which reason St. Peter refers, in his first epistle, to the ancient prophets, and to the inspired preachers of the gospel, to justify the hopes he raised; 'of which salvation,' or deliverance, says he, 'the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:' i. 10. which things 'are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven:' ver. 12. And for the same reason, in this second epistle he refers again to prophecy, as being of all others (and in things of futurity it needs must be) the 'most sure evidence.'

This account of St. Peter's epistles is indeed not mine, but his own; for he tells us expressly that his intention in both his epistles was to make them to whom they were sent, 'mindful of the words which were spoken before of the holy prophets:' he adds, 'and of the commandments of us the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour:' 2 Ep. iii. 1. 2. That this latter part relates to the same subject as the former, will appear by comparing it with the passage just before quoted, 1 Ep. i. 12. where St. Peter considers the Apostles, as prophets or expounders of the prophets, under the assistance of the Holy Ghost, preaching those very things which the ancient prophets had 'testified beforehand.'

Take this key along with you, and see how it will open this so much perplexed passage of Scripture now under consideration: the Apostle's reasoning to the faithful believers is this: 'We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the POWER and COMING of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his MAJESTY. For he received from God the Father HONOR and GLORY, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a MORE SURE word of prophecy:' 2 Ep. i. 16. &c.

It is evident that the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is the only point here in question; not a word is there relating to any other fact or doctrine of the gospel. To prove this point, the Apostle tells them he had been an eye-witness of his majesty or glory. Whilst our Saviour lived on earth, his condition was mean, and his fortune low: this was a great prejudice against him in the opinion of the Jews, who expected greater things from their Redeemer, and could not easily hope to see him return in glory and power, who lived and died so meanly and so miserably. It is a sufficient answer to all such prejudices, to prove that, mean as he appeared, he had a real majesty, and was actually invested with honor and glory from God the Father.

But this evidence manifestly extends but to one part of the point in question, to show that Christ had himself been glorified; what is there then to show that he will ever return again in this glory and power? For allow all this to be true, might an objector say; yet how does it prove the hopes you would raise of his speedy return in power and glory to deliver his servants, and to take vengeance of his foes? For what is past we willingly take your word; you are a competent witness of what your eyes beheld, and of what your ears heard; but will your seeing him in glory on the mount some years ago, necessarily infer that he shall come again in glory some years hence; and that too, to execute the very purposes you declare? Can any certainty as to future events be collected from past events? or can any thing we see this year assure us what will happen to us the next?

It is true, (we may suppose the Apostle to answer,) all future events are in the hands of God; to him only are they known, and from him only can they certainly be learned. All other arguments in this case can amount only to probabilities and presumptions; and a great presumption it is that Christ shall come in glory, that we have already seen him glorified; and it is a farther evidence of his power to deliver his servants, since God has openly declared him to be his 'well-beloved Son:' but to assure us that he will indeed so come, and so use his power, 'we have a more sure word of prophecy:' that is, we have the very word of God, (speaking by his prophets,) to

whom all futurity is known, to assure us of the certainty of this future event.

This interpretation, as it is easy and natural in itself, and renders to every expression in the text its proper and usual signification; so it is necessary, I conceive, to the Apostle's argument, and plainly enforced by the context, and stands clear of all difficulties. Here is no pretence to say that prophecy is a better argument for the truth of the gospel than all the miracles of Christ and his Apostles; for the truth of the gospel is not the point here in question. St. Peter speaks only of the 'coming of Christ in power,' and of a 'salvation ready to be revealed;' which being yet to come, admitted of no surer evidence than the 'word of prophecy;' which yet he tells us was only as 'a light shining in a dark place.' But the gospel was not a thing 'ready to be revealed;' it had long since been revealed: the gospel was not 'a light shining in a dark place,' but, as he himself expressly calls it, 'a marvellous light,' into which they had been called out of darkness: 1 Ep. ii. 9.

One word more, and I have done with this subject. The 'more sure word of prophecy' here mentioned is not to be understood merely of the prophecies of the Old Testament, for it may refer to the prophecies of the New; and probably does, as appears by St. Peter's appealing not only to the ancient prophets, but also to the preachers of the gospel. How unhappily then was this text made choice of to set up ancient prophecy in opposition to the gospel evidence, since the prophecy here intended is probably itself a gospel evidence, and so far from being superior to all the miracles of Christ and his Apostles, that it owes all its authority to them.

The giving light to this passage will furnish us with an answer to one objection raised against the authority of this second epistle of St. Peter. The learned Grotius judged from some characters which he observed in it, that this second epistle was penned after the destruction of Jerusalem; before which St. Peter was dead. But it is very evident that the author of this second epistle speaks of Christ's coming in power and glory in the very manner which St. Peter speaks of it in the first epistle; and indeed with no other view than that of justifying what was delivered in the first epistle. If by the

'salvation ready to be revealed,' and the 'day of visitation,' and 'appearing of Jesus Christ,' in the first epistle, we are to understand the Apostle as referring to the destruction of Jerusalem then near at hand, we must necessarily in the second epistle understand the same thing by the power and coming of our Lord Jesus; which power and coming was, at the time of writing the second epistle, so far from being over, that it is treated as a thing to come; and for the certainty of which St. Peter had no better evidence than the 'word of prophecy.' Or, if any other coming of Christ is to be understood in this second epistle, the same must be understood in the first; for the second is but a vindication of the doctrine of the first; and no notion common to both epistles can be an objection against the second, since the first was never doubted of in the church. And indeed, whoever reads the two epistles, and compares them carefully, will see such a concern in the second to support the sentiments of the first, that he will be inclined to think that the second epistle could come from no other hand but that which penned the first.

SUMMARY OF DISCOURSE II.

CONSIDERATION of the character which St. Peter gives to prophecy, and the degree of evidence we may reasonably expect from it; which amounts to this, that the knowlege which God gives us of things future by means of prophecy, is but imperfect and obscure; not to be compared with the clear knowlege that will attend on the manifestation of the things themselves. This proposition is confirmed by the authority of Scripture, and some useful observations on the nature and evidence of prophecy are suggested.

If we look into the first epistle of St. Peter, we shall find that the ancient prophecies, of which he speaks in the text, and which he styles *the more sure word of prophecy*, were not apprehended or clearly understood by those inspired persons who delivered them: see ch. i. 11. To the same purpose our Saviour speaks, Matt. xiii. 17. St. Paul also gives the like account of the gift of prophecy under the gospel dispensation, 1 Cor. xiii. 9-12. Now if the prophets and righteous men of the Old and New Testament knew only in part, and prophesied only in part, seeing but darkly as through a glass, it is most evident that others less qualified must have had but a confused and indistinct notion of things foretold. The prophet Daniel, after an extraordinary vision, adds, *I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.* Our Saviour gave a similar answer to the Apostles, Acts i. 6. 7. These passages relate to such prophecies especially as seem to design the times and sea-

sons of God's working; the delay of which often brought the prophets and their predictions into contempt: see Ezek. xii. 22. 27. The case is very much the same in regard to other prophecies: this point enlarged on and explained.

Hence it appears that prophecy was never intended to be a very distinct evidence; and St. Peter's meaning is shown, when he compares it to a light shining in a dark place, and makes this evidence so inferior to that which we are to receive when the fulness of time comes.

But allowing this to be the case of prophecy at the time of delivery, may we not expect to find the prophecy clear and distinct, and exactly corresponding with the event, whenever it comes into existence? Consequently is it not absurd, after an event is come to pass, to apply any ancient prophecies to it, that do not clearly, to the eye of common sense, appear to belong to it?

These questions being admitted, another will be asked; how comes it that many prophecies applied to our Saviour and his actions are still obscure, requiring learning and sagacity to show the connexion between them and events?

In answer to this it must be observed that the obscurity of prophecy does not arise from its being a relation or description of something future; since it is as easy to speak plainly of things future as of things past or present. It is not of the nature of prophecy therefore to be obscure; for if he who gives it thinks fit, it may be made as plain as history. On the other hand, a figurative and dark description of any future event will be figurative and dark still, when the event happens: this exemplified from Isaiah xi. 6. So that the argument from prophecy for the truth of the gospel does not rest on this, that the event has necessarily limited and ascertained the particular meaning of every prophecy; but on this, that every prophecy has in a proper sense been completed by the coming of Christ. We must not expect conviction from every single prophecy applied to

him: the evidence must arise from a view and comparison of all together.

Prophecies are not all of one kind, or of equal clearness: the most literal of them relating to Christ were not always at the time of delivery the plainest; for many of them, involving the most wonderful events, wanted not the veil or cover of figurative language; for being plainly foretold, they could hardly, from the seeming incredibility of the things themselves, be admitted in their literal meaning. This instanced in the prophecy, *a virgin shall conceive a son.* Also in the prophecies from which the resurrection of Christ is inferred.

We may observe therefore, that the most literal prophecies have received the greatest confirmation and most light from the event; but no event can make a figurative expression to be a plain or a literal one, nor restrain to one determinate sense what was originally capable of many.

Thus much is said to show what sort of clearness and evidence we ought to expect from prophecies after their accomplishment; and that we should not expect from such evidence more than it will yield, but be content with that light and direction which God has thought fit to bestow on us.

It is doubtless a mistake, to suppose that prophecy was intended solely or chiefly for their sakes in whose time the events predicted are to happen: this point enlarged on and explained. If we consider the use of prophecy, this will help us to conceive the degree of clearness which ought to attend it. Some people talk as if they thought the truth of some facts recorded in the gospel depended on the clearness of the prophecies relating to them; and they seem to think that they are confuting the belief of our Saviour's resurrection, when they are trying to confound the prophecies which refer to it: but we must be in possession of the fact before we can form any argument from prophecy; and therefore the truth of the resurrection, considered as a fact, is quite independent of the evi-

dence or authority of prophecy. The part of unbelievers should be, to show from the prophets that Jesus was necessarily to rise from the dead; and then to prove that in fact he never did rise: here would be a plain consequence; but if they do not like this method, they ought to let the prophecies alone.

There are many prophecies in the Old Testament relating to the Babylonish captivity, with the destruction of Jerusalem, and the Temple, &c. Can it be supposed that these prophecies were intended to convince the people of the reality of the events when they should happen? Was there any danger that they should imagine themselves safe in their own country, when they were captives at Babylon, unless they had the evidence of prophecy for their captivity? This point enlarged on.

But if it be the case that we must admit all the facts of the gospel to be true, before we can come at the evidence of prophecy, what occasion, it may be said, have we to inquire after prophecy at all? Are not the many miracles wrought by Christ and his Apostles sufficient evidence to us of the truth of the gospel, without troubling ourselves to know whether and how these facts were foretold? In answer to this it may be said that such facts, once admitted to be true, are a complete evidence of the divine authority of a revelation. Had we known no more of Christ than that he claimed to be attended to as a person sent by God, he needed no other credentials than those which he showed; and it would have been impertinent to demand what prophet foretold his coming? For in a like case, who foretold the coming of Moses? His authority as a divine lawgiver stands on his miraculous works, and on the wonderful attestations given to him by God; but not on prophecy, since there were no prophecies relating to him: and this shows that prophecy is not essential to the proof of a divine revelation.

But the case of the gospel differs from that of the law; for

though the law was not prophesied of, the gospel was: he who delivered the law was one of the first who prophesied of the gospel, and told the people so long beforehand, *that God would raise a prophet like unto him, whom they must hear in all things.* Of him also the succeeding prophets speak more fully. Now one of the characters which our Saviour constantly assumes and claims in the gospel is this, that he is the person spoken of by Moses and the prophets. This then is the point to be tried on the evidence of prophecy; viz. whether there be enough plain and clear in the prophecies to show us that Christ is the person foretold under the Old Testament. If there is, we are at the end of our inquiry, and want no farther help from prophecy, especially since *we have seen the day dawn, and enjoyed the marvellous light of the gospel of God.*

We do not here take into consideration the great advantages that may be made of prophetical evidence for convincing unbelievers of the truth of the gospel: we are only considering how far the truth of the gospel necessarily depends on this kind of evidence. These are two very different inquiries: this point enlarged on.

DISCOURSE II.

LET us proceed to consider the character which St. Peter gives of prophecy, and the degree of evidence which we may reasonably expect from it. 'Prophecy is a light shining in a dark place, and we do well to give heed to it until the day dawn.' St. Peter's meaning is this: 'the time will come when the things ye hope for shall be placed in a clear light, when you shall see all your expectations fully justified in the accomplishment; in the meanwhile ye do well to attend to prophecy, though but a small glimmering light, and shining at a distance in a dark place, yet the best you have, or can have at present.' Metaphorical expressions and similitudes ought not to be rigidly and strictly canvassed; it is sufficient to see the general import and meaning of them; which in the present case is very clear, and amounts to this, that the knowlege God gives us of things future by the means of prophecy is but an imperfect obscure knowlege, nothing to be compared to the clear knowlege that will attend on the manifestation of the things themselves.

I shall endeavor to confirm this proposition by the authority of Scripture, and to suggest some observations which may be of use when we are called on to judge of the nature of prophecy, and the evidence arising from it.

Whether prophecy be a clear evidence before the completion or no, is no matter of controversy; so far from it, that they who tell us prophecy is the best argument even for Christianity, do not yet think it a clear one. But without regard to any man's opinion, it will be proper to see what notion the inspired writers themselves had of the word of prophecy.

If we look into the first Epistle of St. Peter, we shall find that the ancient prophecies, of which he speaks in the text, and which he styles the 'more sure word of prophecy,' were not

apprehended or clearly understood by those inspired persons who delivered them; for there he represents them 'searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow:' i. 11. To the same purpose our Saviour speaks, Matt. xiii. 17. 'Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.' St. Paul gives the like account of the gift of prophecy under the gospel dispensation: 'We know in part, and we prophecy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known:' 1 Cor. xiii. 9. 10. 12. Now if the prophets and righteous men of old, to whom the word of God came, did not clearly understand the things which they foretold, but employed themselves in searching and examining the prophetical testimonies of the Spirit which was in them; if the prophets of the New Testament knew only in part, and prophesied only in part, seeing but darkly as through a glass; it is most evident that others, in all appearance less qualified than they to understand the determinate sense of the prophecies, could have but a confused and indistinct notion of the things foretold.

The prophet Daniel, after a very extraordinary vision, which he reports in his last chapter, immediately adds, 'I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.' The answer here given to Daniel is very like the answer which our Saviour gave the Apostles, on a like inquiry made by them: they ask, 'Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father hath put in his own power:' Acts i. 6. 7. It did belong to them undoubtedly and to every believing Jew, 'to give heed to the word of prophecy' according to St. Peter's exhortation in the text; and since it did not belong to them to know the times

and seasons, it is evident the word of prophecy was not intended to give a clear and distinct light in this case.

These last passages relate to such prophecies especially as seem to design the times and seasons of God's working; and these predictions being oftentimes delayed in the accomplishment much beyond the expectation of those to whom they were delivered, it brought the prophets and their predictions frequently into contempt, and gave the people occasion to harden themselves against the fears and apprehensions of the evils threatened. Hence came the reproach on the prophets taken notice of by Ezekiel: 'The vision that he seeth is for many days to come; and he prophesieth of the times that are far off:' xii. 27. which speech grew up into a proverb: 'What is that proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth?' ver. 22. The case is very much the same in regard to other prophecies. Whoever looks into the prophetical writings will find that they are generally penned in a very exalted style, full of bold figures describing the judgment or the mercies of God; representing spiritual blessings under the images of temporal prosperity, and oftentimes such images as cannot possibly admit of a literal interpretation. In which case, though we may see the general intent and meaning, and find sufficient ground for hope and fear from the scope of the prophecy, yet we can with no certainty fix the precise and determinate manner in which the words are to be fulfilled.

Prophecy is, by the author of prophecy, thus described: 'I have multiplied visions, and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets:' Hosea xii. 10. Which similitudes are elsewhere spoken of as 'dark speeches' delivered to the prophets in visions and in dreams: Numb. xii. 6. 8. For this reason the Jews, when they spoke with contempt of their prophets, were used to say, 'Doth he not speak parables?' Ezek. xx. 49. Our Saviour seems to speak of the ancient prophecies under the same character: 'Know ye not,' says he to his disciples, 'this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?' Mark iv. 13. That is, if ye understand not this plain parable of the sower, how will ye understand all the ancient prophecies relating to the gospel, which are much harder parables?

These passages are sufficient to prove that prophecy was never intended to be a very distinct evidence; and to show St. Peter's meaning in comparing the word of prophecy to a light shining in a dark place, and in making this evidence so much inferior to the evidence we are to receive, when the fulness of time comes for the manifestation of God's promises.

But allowing this to be the case of prophecy at the time of delivery, are we not however to expect to find the prophecy clear and distinct, and exactly corresponding to the event, whenever the event comes into existence? and consequently, is it not absurd, after an event is come to pass, to apply any ancient prophecies to it, that do not manifestly, to the eyes of common sense, appear to belong to it? These questions being admitted, another will be asked: how comes it to pass that many of the prophecies, applied by the writers of the gospel to our Saviour and his actions, are still dark and obscure; and so far from belonging evidently to him and him only, that it requires much learning and sagacity to show even now the connexion between some prophecies and the events?

In answer to these questions, we must observe that the obscurity of prophecy does not arise from hence, that it is a relation or description of something future; for it is as easy to speak of things future plainly and intelligibly, as it is of things past or present. The same language serves in both cases with little variation. He who says the river will overflow its banks next year, speaks as plainly as he who says it did overflow its banks last year. It is not therefore of the nature of prophecy to be obscure, for it may easily be made, when he who gives it thinks fit, as plain as history.

On the other side, a figurative and dark description of a future event will be figurative and dark still when the event happens, and consequently will have all the obscurity of a figurative dark description as well after as before the event. The prophet Isaiah describes the peace of Christ's kingdom in the following manner: 'The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them:' xi. 6. Nobody, I suppose, (some modern Jews excepted,) ever understood this literally; nor can it now be

literally applied to the state of the gospel. It was and is capable of different interpretations: it may mean temporal peace, and that either public of kingdoms and nations, or private among the professors of the gospel: it may prefigure an internal and spiritual peace, the tranquillity of mind which sets a man at peace with God, himself, and the world. But whatever the true meaning is, this prophecy, expounded by the rules of language only, does no more obtrude one determinate sense on the mind since the coming of Christ, than it did before. But then we say, the state of the gospel was very properly prefigured in this description, and is as properly prefigured by an hundred more of the like kind; and since they all agree in a fair application to the state of the gospel, we strongly conclude that the gospel state was the thing foretold under these and many other like expressions. So that the argument from prophecy for the truth of the gospel does not rest on this, that the event has necessarily limited and ascertained the particular sense and meaning of every prophecy; but in this, that every prophecy has in a proper sense been completed by the coming of Christ. It is absurd therefore to expect clear and evident conviction from every single prophecy applied to Christ; the evidence must arise from a view and comparison of all together.

Prophecies are not all of one kind, or of equal clearness: the most literal prophecies relating to Christ were not always at the time of the delivery the plainest; for many of these relating to the most surprising and wonderful events under the gospel, wanted not the veil or cover of figurative language; for being plainly foretold, they could hardly, for the seeming incredibility of the things themselves, be received and admitted in their true literal meaning. 'A virgin shall conceive a son' was a proposition which seemed to want some other interpretation than a literal one, which was inconsistent with all experience of the world; and therefore probably this prophecy was not understood by the ancient Jews, as importing a miraculous conception. The event has not made this prophecy clearer than it was before; the language of it was as well understood in the prophet's time as now; but common sense led every man to understand it in a sense agreeable to nature and experience: but the event has showed us that the plain literal sense, however in-

consistent with the experience of nature, is the true sense. In like manner the prophecies from which the resurrection of Christ is inferred, were obscure and dark, from a seeming inconsistency between the several parts of them. It is foretold that Christ should be 'despised and rejected of men,' a man of sorrow and affliction; that his affliction should pursue him even to the grave; and it is also foretold that, notwithstanding these sufferings and a wretched death, he should 'prolong his days,' and have an everlasting kingdom, and see the work of the Lord prosper in his hands. These prophecies are not at all plainer now than they were in the beginning; but the plain sense appeared at that time loaded with contradictions: here was one born to misery and affliction, and yet he was the heir of an everlasting kingdom: he was condemned, executed, laid in the grave, and after all this he was to prolong his days, and see the work of the Lord prosper in his hands. The resurrection of Christ reconciled all these difficulties and seeming inconsistencies; and we now readily admit these prophecies in their plain literal sense; which was a very plain sense before, though a very hard one to be imagined or believed.

You may observe then, that the most literal prophecies have received the greatest confirmation and the most light from the event. For the difficulty in this case not lying in the darkness or obscurity of the expression, but in the seeming impossibility of the thing foretold, such seeming impossibility the event fully cleared; but no event can make a figurative or metaphorical expression to be a plain or a literal one, or restrain the language of any prophecy to one determinate sense only, which was originally capable of many.

I have said thus much to show what sort of clearness and evidence we ought to expect from prophecies after their accomplishment. It is a great prejudice against this argument when men come to it expecting more from it than it will yield. This they are led to by hearing it often said that prophecy, however dark and obscure at first, grows wonderfully plain on the accomplishment; which in some cases, as I have shown, is in fact true, but is not, cannot be so in all cases.

You may think it perhaps strange that I should be here pleading, as it were, for the obscurity of ancient prophecies;

whereas you may very well conceive it would be more to the purpose of a Christian divine to maintain their clearness. Now as Moses in another case said, 'I would to God all the Lord's people were prophets;' so say I in this case, I would to God all the prophecies of the Lord were manifest to all his people. But it matters little what we wish for or think best; we must be content with such light and direction as God has thought proper to bestow on us; and to inquire why the ancient prophecies are not clearer, is like inquiring why God has not given us more reason, or made us as wise as angels: he has given us in both cases so much light as he thought proper, and enough to serve the ends he intended.

It is doubtless a mistake to conceive prophecy to be intended solely or chiefly for their sakes in whose time the events predicted are to happen. What great occasion is there to lay in so long beforehand the evidences of prophecy to convince men of things that are to happen in their own times; the truth of which they may if they please learn from their own senses? How low an idea does it give of the administration of Providence, in sending prophets one after another in every age from Adam to Christ, to imagine that all this apparatus was for their sakes who lived in and after the times of Christ, with little regard to the ages to whom the prophecies were delivered? As I think the prophecies of the New Testament are chiefly for our sake, 'who live by faith and not by sight;' so I imagine the ancient prophecies had the like use, and were chiefly intended to support the faith and religion of the old world. Had it been otherwise, a set of prophecies given some few years before the birth of Christ, would have served our purpose as well as a series of prophecies given from the very beginning, and running through every age.

Let us then consider the use of prophecy, and this will help us to conceive the degree of clearness which ought to attend it. Some people are apt to talk as if they thought the truth of some facts recorded in the gospel depended on the clearness of the prophecies relating to them. They speak, for instance, as if they imagined the certainty and reality of our Saviour's resurrection were much concerned in the clearness of the prophecies relating to that great and wonderful event; and seem

to think that they are confuting the belief of his resurrection, when they are trying to confound the prophecies relating to it. But can any thing be more absurd? For what ground or pretence is there to inquire whether the prophecies, foreshowing that the Messiah should die and rise again, do truly belong to Jesus, unless we are first satisfied that Jesus died and rose again? We must be in possession of the fact before we can form any argument from prophecy; and therefore the truth of the resurrection, considered as a fact, is quite independent of the evidence or authority of prophecy.

The part which unbelievers ought to take in this question, should be to show from the prophets that Jesus was necessarily to rise from the dead, and then to prove that in fact Jesus never did rise: here would be a plain consequence. But if they do not like this method, they ought to let the prophecies alone; for if Jesus did not rise, there is no harm done if the prophets have not foretold it; and if they allow the resurrection of Jesus, what do they gain by discrediting the prophecies? The event will be what it is, let the prophecies be what they will.

There are many prophecies in the Old Testament relating to the Babylonish captivity, and very distinct they are, describing the ruin of the holy city, the destruction of the Temple, the carrying the tribes into a distant country, and the continuance of the captivity for seventy years. Can you suppose these prophecies intended to convince the people of the reality of these events when they should happen? Was there any danger they should imagine themselves safe in their own country, when they were captives at Babylon, unless they had the evidence of prophecy for their captivity? or, that they should think their temple standing in all its glory, when it was ruined before their eyes? If the supposition be absurd in this case, it is so in every case; for the argument from prophecy is in all instances the same. It is plain then that matters related in the gospel do not depend for their reality on the evidence of prophecy; they may be true though never foretold, or very obscurely foretold; nay, they must be admitted as true before we can so much as inquire whether any prophecy belongs to them.

But if this be the case, that we must admit all the facts of

the gospel to be true before we can come at the evidence of prophecy, what occasion have we, you will say, to inquire after prophecy at all? Are not the many miracles of Christ, his resurrection from the dead, his ascension to heaven, the pouring forth the gifts of the Spirit on the Apostles, their speaking with tongues, and doing many wonders in the name of Christ, sufficient evidence to us of the truth of the gospel, without troubling ourselves to know whether these things were foretold, or in what manner they were foretold? To answer this question plainly, I think such facts, once admitted to be true, are a complete evidence of the divine authority of a revelation; and had we known no more of Christ than that he claimed to be attended to as a person sent and commissioned by God, he needed no other credentials than these already mentioned; and it would have been impertinent to demand what prophet foretold his coming. For in a like case, who foretold the coming of Moses to be a lawgiver to Israel? God had promised Abraham to give his posterity the land of Canaan; but that he would give it by Moses he had not promised; that he would talk with him 'face to face,' and deliver his law to him, and by him to the people, he had not foretold: the authority therefore of Moses as a divine lawgiver stands on the miraculous works performed by him, and the wonderful attestations given to him by the presence of God in the mount in the eyes of all the people; but on prophecy it does not stand, for of him there were no prophecies. This shows that prophecy is not an evidence essential to the proof of a divine revelation; for it may be spared in one as well as another.

But the case of the gospel differs from that of the law; for though the law was not prophesied of, the gospel was: he who delivered the law was one of the first who prophesied of the gospel, and told the people so long beforehand, 'that God would raise a prophet like unto him, whom they must hear in all things:' by which prediction he guarded the people against the prejudice which his own authority was like to create against a new lawgiver; telling them beforehand that when the great prophet came, their obedience ought to be transferred to him. The succeeding prophets speak more fully of the office, character, sufferings, and glory of the Saviour of Israel, and

the desire of all nations. Now one of the characters which our Saviour constantly assumes and claims in the gospel is this, that he is the person spoken of by Moses and the prophets. Whether he is this person or no must be tried by the words of prophecy; and this makes the argument from prophecy so far necessary to establish the claim of the gospel; and it has been very justly as well as acutely observed, that the proof of this point must rely intirely on the evidence of prophecy. Miracles in this case can afford no help; if the prophets have not spoken of Christ, all the miracles in the world will not prove that they have spoken of him.*

These considerations show how far the gospel is necessarily concerned in prophetical evidence. Christ has done the works which no man ever did, and given the fullest evidence of a divine commission; but he claims to be the person foretold in the law and the prophets; and as truth must ever be consistent with itself, this claim must be true, or it destroys all others. This is the point then to be tried on the evidence of prophecy: is Christ that person described and foretold under the Old Testament or no? Whether all the prophecies relating to him be plain or not plain; whether all the ways used by the Jews of arguing from the Old Testamant, be convincing to us or no, it matters little: the single question is, is there enough plain to show us that Christ is the person foretold under the Old Testament? If there is, we are at an end of our inquiry, and want no farther help from prophecy; especially since we, to use St. Peter's expression, have, in this case, 'seen the day dawn, and enjoyed the marvellous light of the gospel of God.'

I am not now speaking of the great advantage that may be made of prophetical evidence for convincing unbelievers of the truth of the gospel, but am considering how far the truth of the gospel necessarily depends on this kind of evidence. These are two very different inquiries. It is necessary for us to show that Christ is the person promised to be a Saviour to Israel; and when we have shown this, no opposer of the gospel has more to demand. But we may carry our inquiries much farther; we may contemplate all the steps of Providence relating

* Grounds and Reasons, p. 31.

to the salvation and redemption of mankind in the several ages of the world, and by a comparison of all the parts, may discern that Christ was indeed the end of the law, and of all promises made to the fathers: that all the deliverances given by God to his people were but shadows, and as it were an earnest of the great deliverance he intended to give by his Son: that all the ceremonials of the law were representations of the substance of the gospel: that the Aaronical sacrifices and priesthood were figures of better things to come. But these inquiries do not stand in the rank of things to be necessarily proved to every believer; they do not enter into the 'principles of the doctrine of Christ,' as the Apostle to the Hebrews expressly tells us; but belong to those 'who go on to perfection;' which distinction given by the Apostle in the fifth and sixth chapters to the Hebrews, is well worth considering, as being a key to open the true use of all typical and allegorical applications of Scripture.

SUMMARY OF DISCOURSE III.

To enable ourselves to judge of prophecy, we must inquire to what end it was given. It cannot be maintained that we have any right to the knowlege of things future; we can make no demand on the wisdom, or goodness, or justice of God for any degree of it; whenever therefore we have any, we must ascribe it to some special reasons of Providence, which reasons alone can limit it: for if we have from prophecy so much light as fully answers the end of giving it, what reason can we have to complain for want of more? We come therefore to the only proper consideration: what end did the wisdom of God propose by the ancient prophecies, and how has it been served by them? What the writer understands by prophecy explained.

It cannot be supposed that God has delivered prophecies only to satisfy curiosity, or afford amusement to the world: there must be some end intended worthy of the Author; and what end can be conceived worthy of God, but the promotion of virtue and religion, and the general peace and happiness of mankind?

It is true, it may be said, that these things belong indeed to God; but what has prophecy to do with them? God can govern the world without letting us into his secrets; and as for virtue, religion, and our happiness, he has given us a plain law to walk by, in the result of that reason and knowlege with which he has endowed us. Prophecy can never contradict or overrule this light; nor can we suppose that we came so imperfect from our Maker's hands as to be in constant want of an admonisher.

We may allow the original state of human nature to be as perfect and complete as the objector can require.

But what if the case be altered? how will matters then stand? Since man was created a moral agent, with freedom of will, it was possible for him to fall, and consequently, possibly he may have fallen. Suppose this to be the case, and then say, from natural religion, what must such sinners do? Repent, perhaps; for it is agreeable to the goodness of God to accept repentance, and to restore offenders to his favor. The inefficacy of mere repentance fully shown. When you prove to sinners the excellency of natural religion, you only show them how justly they may expect to be punished for their iniquity; a sad truth, which wants no such confirmation: whether God will ever pardon and restore them never can be learned from that source.

Should God think fit to be reconciled to sinners, natural religion would again become the rule of their future trial and obedience; but their hopes must flow from another spring; from the promise of God alone, that is, from the word of prophecy; for which reason prophecy must ever be an essential part of such a sinner's religion. And this reasoning agrees with the most ancient and authentic account of the beginning of prophecy in the world.

During the time of man's innocence there were frequent communications between God and him, but not the least hint of any word of prophecy delivered to him: the hopes of natural religion were then alive and vigorous; it wanted no other assistance, and therefore it had no other.

But when the case was altered by the fall of our first parents, when natural religion had no longer any sure hopes or comfort, but left them to the fearful expectation of God's judgment, then came in the word of prophecy; not in opposition to natural religion, but in support of it, and to convey new hopes to man.

The prophecy then given, being the foundation of all that have been since, deserves particular consideration.

Previous observations on the historical narration of the fall, showing that the commonly received interpretation is the true one. If we interpret the words of Moses with the same equity as we use towards any other ancient writer, this plain fact undeniably arises from the history, that man was tempted and disobeyed God, and forfeited all title to happiness and to life itself; that God judged him, and the deceiver likewise under the form of a serpent. No more than this is required for considering the prophecy before us, which is part of the sentence passed on the deceiver: *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel:* Gen. iii. 15.

Christian writers apply this to our blessed Saviour, emphatically styled here *the seed of the woman*, who came in the fulness of time *to bruise the serpent's head* by destroying the works of the Devil, and restoring those who were held under the bondage of sin. Objections are made to this interpretation by those who look no farther than to the third chapter of Genesis. To understand it rightly, we must go back to that state and condition of things which was at the time of the delivery of this prophecy, and consider (if haply we may discover it) what God intended to discover, and what our first parents may be supposed to have understood by it.

It is shown from that state of things, that the primary intention of this prophecy must have been to comfort and support them under their awful and severe judgment; and that this was necessary to the state of the world, and of religion, which could not have been upheld without the communication of some such hopes. They must necessarily have understood the prophecy either according to the literal meaning of the words, or according to such as the whole transaction, of which they are a part, requires. The absurdity of understanding it in the

literal sense pointed out. The meaning which all the circumstances of the transaction indicated is next shown.

The application which we are to make of this instance considered.

This prophecy was to our first parents very obscure; it was but *a light shining in a dark place;* and all they could conclude from it was, that their case was not desperate; that some remedy and deliverance would in time appear; but when, or where, or by what means, they could not understand: yet if it was a foundation for religion and confidence in God, after their fall, it fully answered the necessity of their case, and manifested to them all that God intended to make manifest. It is indeed obscure, but it is obscure in those points which God did not intend to explain at that time, and which were not necessary to be known.

But if this prophecy was obscure to our first parents, how is it that we pretend to discover so much more, and to see in it Christ, the mystery of his birth, his sufferings, and his final triumph over the powers of darkness?

Known unto God are all his works from the beginning; and whatever light he thought fit to give to our first parents, or to their children in after times, he must have always known the methods by which he would restore mankind; and therefore all notices given by him of his intended salvation must correspond to the great event, whenever the fulness of time shall make it manifest. But no reason can be given why God should at any time clearly open the secrets of his providence to men; though there is a necessary reason to be given, why all such notices as he thinks fit to give should exactly answer, in due time, to the completion of the great design. The argument from prophecy therefore is not to be formed thus, All the ancient prophecies have expressly pointed out and characterised Jesus Christ: but it must be formed in this manner:—All the notices which God gave to the fathers of his intended salvation are perfectly

answered by the coming of Christ. These methods tried on the prophecy before us.

As this prophecy is the first, so it is the only considerable one in which we have any concern, from the creation to the days of Noah. What has been said therefore on this occasion may be understood as an account of the first period of prophecy, under which its light was proportioned to the wants and necessities of the world, and sufficient to maintain religion after the fall of man, by affording ground for trust in God: this topic enlarged on.

The bringing in of prophecy was not the only change in the state of religion occasioned by the fall. Sacrifice came in at the same time, as appears by the course of the history; and it is hardly possible it should come in, especially at the time it did, any otherwise than on the authority of divine institution. It is the first act of religion mentioned in the sacred story to have been accepted by God: in later times, when the account of things grows clearer, it appears to be appointed by him as an expiation for sin. There is indeed no express declaration of the use of sacrifice in religion at its first appearance; yet there does appear something in the account of Cain's and Abel's offering, which throws light on the matter: this subject considered; the interpretation of which leads us to perceive that the true religion instituted by God has been one and the same from the fall of Adam, subsisting ever on the same principles of faith; at first on only general and obscure hopes, which were gradually unfolded in every age, till the better days came, when God thought good to call us into the *marvellous light of his gospel.*

DISCOURSE III.

IT is necessary to take this matter higher, to look back to the rise and progress of divine prophecy, and to observe what ends the wisdom of God intended to serve by means of it. It is no commendation of prophecy to say that it is very dark and obscure; nor yet can it be a reproach, provided it answers all the ends designed by Providence. To enable ourselves therefore to judge of prophecy, we must inquire to what end prophecy was given; and this is the subject I now propose to your consideration.

It will not be said, because it cannot be maintained, that we have any right to the knowlege of things future. God is not obliged either in wisdom or goodness, and much less in justice, to declare to us the things which shall be hereafter. In regard therefore to the knowlege of futurity, whether it be little or much, or nothing, that God thinks fit to communicate to us, we can have no reason to complain; for having no right, we can pretend no injury. Since therefore we have no demand on God for this sort of knowlege in any degree whatever, it is evident that, whenever we have it, we must ascribe our having it to some special reasons of Providence; which reasons alone can limit the degree of light and knowlege which ought to attend on the word of prophecy. For if we have from prophecy so much light as fully answers the end of giving the prophecy, I would fain know on what reason we can form a complaint for want of more? I mean this, to show how absurd it is for men to take counsel of their curiosity, when they consider the use and weight of prophecy; in this view they will find nothing to satisfy them: they may go on for ever asking why are we not told more, or more distinctly? Which questions we may promise to answer whenever they inform us on what right they demand to be told any thing; which if they cannot do, all such complaints must

be laid aside; and we must come to the only proper and material consideration, what end did the wisdom of God propose to serve by the ancient prophecies, and how has this end been served by them?

"By prophecy I understand all the declarations which God has made concerning the future state of mankind in this world or in the next; consequently all the hopes and expectations which are grounded on God's promises, and do not result from reason and natural knowlege, I refer to prophecy as their original." If there be any other kind of prophecy not comprehended in this description, there may be, perhaps, before we take leave of this subject, a proper place to consider it; but at present I shall confine myself within the limits of this description.

It cannot be supposed that God has delivered prophecies only to satisfy or employ the curiosity of the inquisitive; or that he gave his Spirit to men merely to enable them to give forth predictions for the amusement and entertainment of the world: there must be some end intended worthy of the Author. What end can you conceive worthy of God but the promotion of virtue and religion, and the general peace and happiness of mankind? These things belong to him, as creator and governor of the world; these things are his province.

It is true, you will say, these things do belong indeed to God; but what has prophecy to do with these things? God can govern the world without letting us into his secrets; and as for virtue and religion and our own happiness, he has given us a plain law to walk by, the result of that reason and knowlege with which he has endowed us. Prophecy can never contradict or overrule the light of reason and nature; nor can we suppose that we came so imperfect and unfinished out of the hands of our Creator, as not to have light enough to see our own duty, and to pursue our natural happiness, but to want at every turn an admonisher at our elbow.

Let us allow the original state of nature to be as perfect and complete as you desire.

But what if the case should be altered? how will matters stand then? It is no unreasonable supposition this; for since man was created a moral agent, with freedom of will, it was

possible for him to fall; and consequently, possibly he may have fallen. Let us suppose for the present this to be the case; and tell us now, from natural religion, what must such sinners do? Repent, you will say; for it is agreeable to the goodness of God to accept repentance, and to restore offenders to his favor. Very well; but how often will this remedy serve? May sin and repentance go on for ever in a perpetual round? To allow this differs nothing from allowing a liberty and impunity to sin without repentance. If God is governor and judge of the world, there must be a time for judgment; and men may, after all reasonable and equitable allowances made, be ripe for judgment. Let this be the case then: suppose a man, after all equitable allowances made, to be condemned under and by the law of nature, and living in daily expectation of execution: I ask, what sort of religion you would advise him to in the mean time.—Natural religion?—To what purpose?—He has had his trial and condemnation by that law already, and has nothing to learn from it but the misery of his condition. I do not mean that the sense of natural religion will be lost in such a man. He may see, perhaps more clearly than ever he did, the difference between good and evil, the beauty of moral virtue, and feel the obligations which a rational creature is under to his Maker; but what fruit will all this knowlege yield? what certain hope or comfort will it administer? A man with a rope about his neck may see the equity and excellency of the law by which he dies; and if he does, he must see that the excellency of it is to protect the virtuous and innocent: but what is this excellency to him, who has forfeited the protection of all law? If you would recommend natural religion, exclusive of all other assistance, it is not enough to show from principles of reason the excellency and reasonableness of moral virtue, or to prove from the nature of God that he must delight in and reward virtue: you must go one step farther, and prove from the nature of man too, that he is excellently qualified to obey this law, and cannot well fail of attaining all the happiness under it that ever nature designed for him. If you stop short at this consideration, what do you gain? What imports it that the law is good, if the subjects are so bad, that either they will not or cannot obey it?

When you prove to sinners the excellency of natural religion, you only show them how justly they may expect to be punished for their iniquity: a sad truth, which wants no confirmation! All the possible hope left in such a case is, that God may freely pardon and restore them; but whether he will or no, the offenders can never certainly learn from natural religion.

Should God think fit to be reconciled to sinners, natural religion would again become the rule of their future trial and obedience: but their hopes must flow from another spring; their confidence in God must and can arise only from the promise of God; that is, from the word of prophecy; for which reason prophecy must for ever be an essential part of such a sinner's religion.

This reasoning agrees exactly with the ancientest and most authentic account we have of the beginning of prophecy in the world. When God had finished all his works, and man, the chief of them, he viewed them all, and behold they were very good. How long this goodness lasted we know not; that it did not last very long is certain. During the time of man's innocence there were frequent communications between God and him, but not the least hint of any word of prophecy delivered to him. The hopes of nature were then alive and vigorous, and man had before him the prospect of all that happiness to which he was created, to encourage and support his obedience. In this state natural religion wanted no other assistance, and therefore it had no other.

But when the case was altered by the transgression of our first parents; when natural religion had no longer any sure hopes or comforts in reserve, but left them to the fearful expectation of judgment near at hand; when God came down to judge the offenders, and yet with intention finally to rescue and preserve them from the ruin brought on themselves; then came in the word of prophecy, not in opposition to natural religion, but in support of it, and to convey new hopes to man, since his own were irrecoverably lost and extinguished in the fall.

The prophecy then given being the first, and indeed (as I conceive) the groundwork and foundation of all that have been since, it well deserves our particular consideration.

It may be expected perhaps that the way should be cleared to this inquiry, by removing first the difficulties which arise from the historical narration of the fall; and could any thing material be added in support of what is commonly said on this subject, the time and pains would be well placed: but the more and the oftener this case is considered in all its circumstances, the more will the commonly received interpretation prevail; which is evidently the true ancient interpretation of the Jewish church, as appears by the allusions to the history of the fall, to be met with in the books of the Old Testament.

To some unbelievers, if I mistake not their principles, the history of the fall would have been altogether as incredible, though perhaps not quite so diverting, had it been told in the simplest and plainest language.

It is to little purpose therefore to trouble them with an account of the genius of the eastern people and their language; for you may as soon persuade them that a serpent tempted Eve as that any evil spirit did. If you ask why the Devil might not as well speak to Eve under the form of a serpent, as give out oracles to the old heathen world under that and many other forms, you gain nothing by the question: for oracles, whether heathen or Jewish, are to them alike; they dispute not their authority, but their reality. This is a degree of unbelief which has no right to be admitted to debate the question now under consideration.

As to others who are not infidels with regard to religion in general, yet are shocked with the circumstances of this history; I desire them to consider that the speculations arising from the history of the fall, and the introduction of natural and moral evil into the world, are of all others the most abstruse and farthest removed out of our reach; that this difficulty led men in the earliest time to imagine two independent principles of good and evil; a notion destructive of the sovereignty of God, the maintenance of which is the principal end and design of the Mosaic history. Had the history of man's fall plainly introduced an invisible evil being to confound the works of God, and to be the author of iniquity, it might have given great countenance to this error of two principles; or, to prevent it, Moses must have written a history of the angels' fall likewise;

a point, I suppose, to which his commission did not extend, and of which perhaps we are not capable judges: and since this difficulty might in a great measure be avoided, by having recourse to the common usage of the eastern countries, which was, to clothe history in parables and similitudes, it seems not improbable that for this reason the history of the fall was put into the dress in which we now find it.

The serpent was remarkable for an insidious cunning, and therefore stood as a proper emblem of a deceiver; and yet, being one of the lowest of the creatures, the emblem gave no suspicion of any power concerned that might pretend to rival the Creator.

This method has not so obscured this history, but that we may with great certainty come to the knowlege of all that is necessary for us to know. Let us consider the history of Moses, as we should do any other ancient eastern history of like antiquity: suppose, for instance, that this account of the fall had been preserved to us out of Sanchoniatho's Phœnician history; we should in that case be at a loss perhaps to account for every manner of representation, for every figure and expression in the story; but we should soon agree that all these difficulties were imputable to the manner and customs of his age and country, and should show more respect to so venerable a piece of antiquity than to charge it with want of sense, because we did not understand every minute circumstance. We should likewise agree that there were evidently four persons concerned in the story; the man, the woman, the person represented by the serpent, and God. Disagree we could not about their several parts. The serpent is evidently the tempter; the man and woman the offenders; God the judge of all three. The punishments inflicted on the man and woman have no obscurity in them; and as to the serpent's sentence, we should think it reasonable to give it such a sense as the whole series of the story requires.

It is no unreasonable thing surely to demand the same equity of you in interpreting the sense of Moses, as you would certainly use towards any other ancient writer. And if the same equity be allowed, this plain fact undeniably arises from the history—that man was tempted to disobedience and did

disobey, and forfeited all title to happiness and to life itself; that God judged him, and the deceiver likewise under the form of a serpent. We require no more, and will proceed on this fact to consider the prophecy before us.

The prophecy is part of the sentence passed on the deceiver; the words are these: 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel:' Gen. iii. 15. Christian writers apply this to our blessed Saviour, emphatically styled here 'the seed of the woman,' and who came in the fulness of time to 'bruise the serpent's head,' by destroying the works of the Devil, and restoring those to the liberty of the sons of God who were held under the bondage and captivity of sin. You will say, what unreasonable liberty of interpretation is this? Tell us by what rules of language the seed of the woman is made to denote one particular person, and by what art you discover the mystery of Christ's miraculous conception and birth in this common expression? Tell us, likewise, how bruising the serpent's head comes to signify the destroying the power of sin, and the redemption of mankind by Christ? It is no wonder to hear such questions from those who look no farther than to the third chapter of Genesis, to see the ground of the Christian application. As the prophecy stands there, nothing appears to point out this particular meaning; much less to confine the prophecy to it. But of this hereafter. Let us for the present lay aside all our own notions, and go back to that state and condition of things, which was at the time of the delivery of this prophecy; and see (if haply we may discover it) what God intended to discover at that time by this prophecy, and what we may reasonably suppose our first parents understood it to mean.

They were now in a state of sin, standing before God to receive sentence for their disobedience, and had reason to expect a full execution of the penalty threatened: 'in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.' But God came in mercy as well as judgment, purposing not only to punish, but to restore man. The judgment is awful and severe; the woman is doomed to sorrow in conception; the man to sorrow and travel all the days of his life; the ground is cursed for his sake; and

the end of the judgment is, 'dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.' Had they been left thus, they might have continued in their labor and sorrow for their appointed time, and at last returned to dust without any well-grounded hope or confidence in God: they must have looked on themselves as rejected by their Maker, delivered up to trouble and sorrow in this world, and as having no hope in any other. On this foot, I conceive, there could have been no religion left in the world; for a sense of religion without hope is a state of frenzy and distraction, void of all inducements to love and obedience, or any thing else that is praiseworthy. If therefore God intended to preserve them as objects of mercy, it was absolutely necessary to communicate so much hope to them as might be a rational foundation for their future endeavors to reconcile themselves to him by a better obedience. This seems to be the primary intention of this first divine prophecy; and it was necessary to the state of the world, and the condition of religion, which could not possibly have been supported without the communication of such hopes. The prophecy is excellently adapted to this purpose, and manifestly conveyed such hopes to our first parents. For let us consider in what sense we may suppose them to understand this prophecy. Now they must necessarily understand the prophecy, either according to the literal meaning of the words, or according to such meaning as the whole circumstance of the transaction, of which they are a part, does require. If we suppose them to understand the words literally, and that God meant them so to be understood, this passage must appear ridiculous. Do but imagine that you see God coming to judge the offenders; Adam and Eve before him in the utmost distress; that you hear God inflicting pains and sorrows and misery and death on the first of human race; and that in the midst of all this scene of woe and great calamity, you hear God foretelling, with great solemnity, a very trivial accident that should sometimes happen in the world: that serpents would be apt to bite men by the heels, and that men would be apt to revenge themselves by striking them on the head. What has this trifle to do with the loss of mankind, with the corruption of the natural and moral world, and the ruin of all the glory and happiness of the creation?

Great comfort it was to Adam, doubtless, after telling him that his days should be short and full of misery, and his end without hope, to let him know that he should now and then knock a snake on the head, but not even that without paying dear for his poor victory, for the snake should often bite him by the heel. Adam surely could not understand the prophecy in this sense, though some of his sons have so understood it; a plain indication how much more some men are concerned to maintain a literal interpretation of Scripture than they are to make it speak common sense. Leaving this therefore as absolutely absurd and ridiculous, let us consider what meaning the circumstances of the transaction do necessarily fix to the words of this prophecy. Adam tempted by his wife, and she by the serpent, had fallen from their obedience, and were now in the presence of God expecting judgment. They knew full well at this juncture that their fall was the victory of the serpent, whom by experience they found to be an enemy to God and to man; to man, whom he had ruined by seducing him to sin; to God, the noblest work of whose creation he had defaced. It could not therefore but be some comfort to them to hear the serpent first condemned, and to see that, however he had prevailed against them, he had gained no victory over their Maker, who was able to assert his own honor and to punish this great author of iniquity. By this method of God's proceeding they were secured from thinking that there was any evil being equal to the Creator in power and dominion; an opinion which gained ground in aftertimes through prevalence of evil, and is, where it does prevail, destructive of all true religion. The condemnation therefore of the serpent was the maintenance of God's supremacy; and that it was so understood, we have, if I mistake not, a very ancient testimony in the book of Job: 'With God is strength and wisdom; the deceived and the deceiver are his;' that is, equally subjected to his command: Job xii. 16. The belief of God's supreme dominion, which is the foundation of all religion, being thus preserved, it was still necessary to give them such hopes as might make them capable of religion toward God. These hopes they could not but conceive, when they heard from the mouth of God that the serpent's victory was not a complete victory

over even themselves; that they and their posterity should be enabled to contest his empire; and though they were to suffer much in the struggle, yet finally they should prevail and bruise the serpent's head, and deliver themselves from his power and dominion over them. What now could they conceive this conquest over the serpent to mean? Is it not natural to expect that we shall recover that by victory, which we lost by being defeated? They knew that the enemy had subdued them by sin; could they then conceive hopes of victory otherwise than by righteousness? They lost through sin the happiness of their creation; could they expect less from the return of righteousness than the recovery of the blessings forfeited? What else but this could they expect? For the certain knowlege they had of their loss when the serpent prevailed, could not but lead them to a clear knowlege of what they should regain by prevailing against the serpent. The language of this prophecy is indeed in part metaphorical, but it is a great mistake to think that all metaphors are of uncertain signification; for the design and scope of the speaker, with the circumstances attending, create a fixed and determinate sense. Were it otherwise, there would be no certainty in any language; all languages, the eastern more especially, abounding in metaphors.

Let us now look back to our subject, and see what application we are to make of this instance.

This prophecy was to our first parents but very obscure; it was, in the phrase of St. Peter, but a light shining in a dark place: all that they could certainly conclude from it was, that their case was not desperate; that some remedy, that some deliverance from the evil they were under, would in time appear; but when, or where, or by what means, they could not understand: their own sentence, which returned them back again to the dust of the earth, made it difficult to apprehend what this victory over the serpent should signify, or how they who were shortly to be dust and ashes, should be the better for it. But after all that can be urged on this head to set out the obscurity of this promise, I would ask one question: was not this promise or prophecy, though surrounded with all this obscurity, a foundation for religion, and trust and confidence towards God after the fall, in hopes of deliverance from the evils introduced by

disobedience? If it was, it fully answered the necessity of their case to whom it was given, and manifested to them all that God intended to make manifest. They could have had towards God no religion without some hopes of mercy: it was necessary therefore to convey such hopes; but to tell them how these hopes should be accomplished, at what time and manner precisely, was not necessary to their religion. And what now is to be objected against this prophecy? It is very obscure you say; so it is: but it is obscure in the points which God did not intend to explain at that time, and which were not necessary to be known. You see a plain reason for giving this prophecy, and as far as the reason for giving the prophecy extends, so far the prophecy is very plain: it is obscure only where there is no reason why it should be plain; which surely is a fault easily to be forgiven, and very far from being a proper subject for complaint.

But if this prophecy conveyed to our first parents only a general hope and expectation of pardon and restoration, and was intended by God to convey no more to them; how come we, their posterity, to find so much more in this promise than we suppose them to find? How is it that we pretend to discover Christ in this prophecy, to see in it the mystery of his birth, his sufferings, and his final triumph over all the powers of darkness? By what new light do we discern all these secrets? by what art do we unfold them?

It is no wonder to me that such as come to the examination of the prophecies applied to Christ expecting to find in each of them some express character and mark of Christ, plainly to be understood as such antecedently to his coming, should ask these or many other the like questions, or that the argument from ancient prophecy should appear so slight and trivial to those who know no better use of it.

'Known unto God are all his works from the beginning;' and whatever degree of light he thought fit to communicate to our first parents or to their children in after times, there is no doubt but that he had a perfect knowlege at all times of all the methods by which he intended to rescue and restore mankind: and therefore all the notices given by him to mankind of his intended salvation must correspond to the great event, whenever

the fulness of time shall make it manifest. No reason can be given why God should at all times, or at any time, clearly open the secrets of his providence to men; it depends merely on his good pleasure to do it in what time and in what manner he thinks proper. But there is a necessary reason to be given why all such notices as God thinks fit to give should answer exactly in due time to the completion of the great design. It is absurd therefore to complain of the ancient prophecies for being obscure, for it is challenging God for not telling us more of his secrets. But if we pretend that God has at length manifested to us by the revelation of the gospel the method of his salvation, it is necessary for us to show that all the notices of his salvation given to the old world, do correspond to the things which we have heard and seen with our eyes. The argument from prophecy therefore is not to be formed in this manner: All the ancient prophecies have expressly pointed out and characterised Christ Jesus; but it must be formed in this manner: All the notices which God gave to the fathers of his intended salvation are perfectly answered by the coming of Christ. He never promised or engaged his word in any particular relating to the common salvation, but what he has fully made good by sending his Son to our redemption. Let us try these methods on the prophecy before us. If you demand that we should show you, *a priori*, Christ Jesus set forth in this prophecy, and that God had limited himself by this promise to convey the blessing intended by sending his own Son in the flesh, and by no other means whatever; you demand what I cannot show, nor do I know who can. But if you inquire whether this prophecy, in the obvious and most natural meaning of it, in that sense in which our first parents and their children after might easily understand it, has been verified by the coming of Christ; I conceive it may be made as clear as the sun at noon-day, that all the expectations raised by this prophecy have been completely answered by the redemption wrought by Christ Jesus. And what have you to desire more than to see a prophecy fulfilled exactly? If you insist that the prophecy should have been more express, you must demand of God why he gave you no more light; but you ought at least to suspend this demand till you have a reason to show for it.

I know that this prophecy is urged farther, and that Christian writers argue from the expression of it, to show that Christ is therein particularly foretold: he properly is the 'seed of a woman' in a sense in which no other ever was; his sufferings were well prefigured by 'the bruising of the heel;' his complete victory over sin and death by 'bruising the serpent's head.' When unbelievers hear such reasonings, they think themselves intitled to laugh; but their scorn be to themselves. We readily allow that the expressions do not imply necessarily this sense; we allow farther that there is no appearance that our first parents understood them in this sense, or that God intended they should so understand them: but since this prophecy has been plainly fulfilled in Christ, and by the event appropriated to him only, I would fain know how it comes to be conceived to be so ridiculous a thing in us to suppose that God, to whom the whole event was known from the beginning,* should make choice of such expressions as naturally conveyed so much knowlege as he intended to convey to our first parents, and yet should appear in the fulness of time to have been peculiarly adapted to the event which he from the beginning saw, and which he intended the world should one day see; and which when they should see, they might the more easily acknowlege to be the work of his hand, by the secret evidence which he had inclosed from the days of old in the words of prophecy. However the wit of man may despise this method, yet is there nothing in it unbecoming the wisdom of God. And when we see this to be the case not only in this instance, but in many other prophecies of the Old Testament, it is not without reason we conclude that under the obscurity of ancient prophecy there was an evidence of God's truth kept in reserve, to be made manifest in due time.

* 'Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me: declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:' Isa. xlvi. 9. 10.

'The works of the Lord are done in judgment from the beginning: and from the time he made them, he disposed the parts thereof:' Ecclus xvi. 26.

As this prophecy is the first, so it is the only considerable one in which we have any concern from the creation to the days of Noah. What has been discoursed therefore on this occasion may be understood as an account of the first period of prophecy. Under this period the light of prophecy was proportioned to the wants and necessities of the world, and sufficient to maintain religion after the fall of man, by affording sufficient grounds for trust and confidence in God; without which grounds, which could then no otherways be had but by promise from God, religion could not have been supported in the world. This prophecy was the grand charter of God's mercy after the fall. Nature had no certain help for sinners liable to condemnation; her right was lost with her innocence. It was necessary therefore either to destroy the offenders, or to save them by raising them to a capacity of salvation, by giving them such hopes as might enable them to exercise a reasonable religion. So far the light of prophecy extended. By what means God intended to work his salvation he did not expressly declare; and who has a right to complain that he did not, or to prescribe to him rules in dispensing his mercy to the children of men? This prophecy we, on whom the latter days are come, have seen fully verified; more fully than those to whom it was delivered could perhaps conceive. View this prophecy then with respect to those to whom it was given, it answered their want and the immediate end proposed by God; view it with respect to ourselves, and it answers ours; and shall we still complain of its obscurity?

The bringing in of prophecy was not the only change in the state of religion occasioned by the fall. Sacrifice came in at the same time, as appears by the course of the history; and it is hardly possible it should come in, especially at the time it did, any otherwise than on the authority of divine institution. It is the first act of religion mentioned in the sacred story to be accepted by God, which implies strongly that it was of his own appointment; for we can hardly suppose that such a mark of distinction would have been set on a mere human invention. In later times, when the account of things grows clearer, sacrifice appears to be appointed by God as an expiation for sin; and we have no reason to imagine that it was turned aside from

its original use. There is indeed no express declaration of the use of sacrifice in religion at its first appearance, and yet something there seems to be in the account that may give light in this matter. We read that 'Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel of the firstlings of his flock, and the fat thereof: the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect.' Allowing the maxim of the Jewish church to have been good from the first institution of sacrifice, 'that without blood there is no remission,' the case may possibly be this: Abel came a petitioner for grace and pardon, and brought the atonement appointed for sin; Cain appears before God as a just person wanting no repentance; he brings an offering in acknowlegement of God's goodness and bounty, but no atonement in acknowlegement of his own wretchedness. The expostulation of God with Cain favors this account: 'If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou dost not well, sin lieth at thy door:' that is, if thou art righteous, thy righteousness shall save thee: if thou art not, by what expiation is thy sin purged? It lieth still at thy door. Add to this, that the Apostle to the Hebrews says, 'that Abel's sacrifice was rendered excellent by faith:' what could this faith be, but a reliance on the promises and appointments of God? which faith Cain wanted, relying on his well-doing.

If you admit this interpretation, it plainly shows that the true religion instituted by God has been one and the same from the fall of Adam, subsisting ever on the same principles of faith; at first on only general and obscure hopes, which were gradually opened and unfolded in every age till the better days came, when God thought good to call us into the 'marvellous light of his gospel.'

This piece of history is all the account we have of the religion of the antediluvian world. It was proper to be considered for the relation there is between prophecy and the state of religion in the world; and for this reason also, because sacrifice may perhaps be found to be one kind of prophecy or representation of the one great sacrifice once offered for the sins of the world.

SUMMARY OF DISCOURSE IV.

WE have seen the beginning of prophecy, with the measure of light and hope which it brought. The next inquiry is, by what degrees this promise was unfolded in succeeding ages.

If we consider the first prophecy as the foundation of those hopes in which all the sons of Adam have an interest, we shall not wonder to find that the administrations of Providence have had in all ages relation to it, and will have until its full accomplishment.

One thing in this inquiry cannot easily be denied; that if the ancient prophecies regarding mankind be divine oracles, there must be a consistency in the whole; and however obscure some part of them may have been at first, or in succeeding ages, they must conspire and centre in that great end which was always in the view of Providence. *Known unto God are all his works*, &c. Acts xv. 18. Taking this prophecy then to contain God's purpose with regard to mankind, his administrations and succeeding declarations must be the best commentary on it.

The account we have of the antediluvian world is very short, and conveys to us but little knowlege of religion, or of the hopes and expectations then entertained; yet something there is to show that the curse of the fall was remembered and felt; and that those who preserved a sense of religion, had an expectation of being delivered from the curse; which could only be grounded, as far as appears, on this prophecy.

Noah was born in the eleventh century after the fall, when his father Lamech, by the spirit of prophecy, declared, *This*

same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed: Gen. v. 19.

This curious passage will throw some light on the condition of the world during this period. It is shown how we may fairly conclude from it: 1. that the curse on the ground subsisted in all its rigor to the days of Lamech: 2. that there was an expectation in his time, at least among those who had not forgotten God, of a deliverance from the curse of the fall: 3. that the ancient expectation founded on the prophecy given at the fall, was not of an immediate and sudden deliverance: 4. that the ancient expectation was not, that the world should be delivered all at once from the whole curse, but that the deliverance should be gradual; to which notion St. Paul alludes, who tells us, *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*

In consequence of this exposition of Lamech's prediction, it must be maintained that the prophecy has been verified in the event; that the earth has been restored from the curse of the fall, and now enjoys the effect of the blessing bestowed on Noah. Against this notion there will arise many prejudices.

In the first place, the prophecy given at the fall has been usually appropriated to Jesus Christ, and to the deliverance we expect from him, by restoration to life and immortality.

In answer to this the following observations are offered: 1. that the curse of the fall manifestly consists of several parts. 2. The prophecy given to support man under this curse mentions no kind of deliverance particularly, but conveys a general hope, which is limited to no one circumstance of it more than another. 3. Should there appear reason for thinking that one part of the prophecy is fulfilled, and one part of the curse removed, this, far from weakening, will strengthen our hopes of seeing the whole removed in God's own time. 4. It ought to be no objection that this prophecy is supposed to point out

more events or more persons than one, since this is analogous to other ancient prophecies.

Another prejudice will arise from the common notion of the present and past state of the earth. Instead of seeing any alteration for the better, according to Lamech's prophecy, men think they see a change for the worse in every age: their observations however show how much they themselves alter, but show nothing else. This prejudice has a great support from the ancient traditions of the golden age. But it is shown that this golden age may be, and ought to be, referred to times succeeding the flood, which times afforded ground enough for those ancient traditions, without supposing any such alterations in the state of the earth as are commonly imagined. These prejudices therefore being set aside, the truth of the case is examined by the best light now remaining.

Three different interpretations of Lamech's prediction are refuted; first, that Noah found out proper tools and instruments of husbandry: secondly, that he discovered the art of making wine: thirdly, that Lamech had no view but to the circumstances of his own family, and only rejoiced to see a son born, who might in time assist him in cultivating the ground.

The Jewish interpreters are generally agreed in expounding it as a deliverance from the labor and toil of tillage, occasioned by the curse on the ground; but the Scripture will be our best guide.

Lamech foretells that his son Noah should *comfort them concerning the works and toil of their hands, because of the ground which the Lord had cursed.* When God informs Noah of his design to destroy the world, he adds, *But with thee I will establish my covenant.* Lamech expected, in virtue of God's promise, a deliverance from the curse of the earth, and foresees that deliverance would come through his son: this point enlarged on.

The flood being over, God declares, *I will not again curse*

the ground any more for man's sake. From which it appears, 1. that the flood was the effect of that curse denounced against the earth for man's sake: 2. that the old curse was fully executed and accomplished in the flood; in consequence of which discharge a new blessing is immediately pronounced on the earth: see Gen. viii. 22. This is called a covenant between God and the earth, ix. 13. and a covenant with Noah and his seed, and *with every living creature,* &c. ix. 8-10. And it is with respect to this covenant that the Psalmist breaks forth into admiration of God's goodness: Psalm xxxvi. 5. 6.

When Adam was first formed and placed on the earth, he had several blessings and privileges conferred on him by God: these were forfeited by the fall. But what if we see these very blessings restored after the flood to Noah and his posterity! This fully shown from Gen. i. 28. compared with ix. 1. Gen. i. 28. with ix. 2. i. 19. with ix. 3. i. 11. with viii. 22. i. 14. with viii. 22.

It may perhaps be thought that we see but little effect of this new blessing; that the life of man is still labour and toil, and that he still eats the bread of carefulness, &c. Such complaints however are but the effect of prejudice: men speak in this case as if they thought there were no thorns and thistles till after the fall. Yet for what employment do they suppose that man was made: *For a little sleep, a little slumber, and a little folding of the hands to sleep?* Surely this was not the case: even in Paradise it was Adam's business to dress and keep the garden; and this required some labor without doubt. After the fall labor increased, and continued very burthensome to the time of the flood; and God's promise of regular seasons after the flood seems to intimate that they were very irregular and confused before; which circumstance will account for all the change we suppose.

There are serious writers who think that the earth was much damaged and rendered less fertile by the flood. But this judgment ought to be grounded on the knowlege, not only of the present state of the earth, but also of its state before the flood: of this we know only that it was a very bad one, which is not enough to support us in judging that the present state is much worse.

We meet with frequent allusions to this covenant with Noah in later times, and in later books of Scripture. The Son of Sirach tells us that *an everlasting covenant* (or the covenant of the age, διαθῆκαι αἰῶνος) *was made with him*, xliv. 18.: for Noah was the father of the age, and had the covenant of the age after the flood, as Christ was the father, and brought in the new covenant of the succeeding age.

Jeremiah introduces God appealing to his fidelity in the execution of this first covenant, as a reason why he should be trusted for the performance of the second: xxxiii. 20. 21. 25. So also Isaiah liv. 9. The lxvth psalm too seems to be a comment on God's covenant with Noah: this illustrated.

During the age of this covenant, the character by which God was known and applied to, was relative to this covenant and the blessings of it: see Job v. 8.-10.; Ps. cxlvii. 7.-9.; Jer. v. 24. Also Acts xiv. 17. Our blessed Saviour likewise commends and extols the mercy of God in the works of this first covenant: *He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust:* which words are a direct comment on the terms of Noah's covenant for fruitful seasons, which were to continue without being interrupted again for the sake of man's iniquity; or as the text itself expresses it, *though the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth:* Gen. viii. 21. This point enlarged on.

These allusions, and many more such, suppose a restoration

of the earth after the flood, and a new blessing given to it in virtue of God's covenant; and without this supposition it is difficult to account for some passages in Scripture, which speak of the goodness of the earth, and the great plenty it affords. How comes it that this very earth, cursed with barrenness, and to be a nursery for thorns and thistles, is afterwards represented as flowing with milk and honey, &c.? Only by the curse of the fall being expiated at the flood.

The state of prophecy after the flood is next considered; and on what ground the religion of the new world subsisted.

No new prophecy is given to Noah after the flood, nor to any of his children, till the call of Abraham; the reason of which seems to be this: the power and sovereignty of God were so manifestly displayed in the deluge, and made such strong impressions on the few persons then alive, and came so well attested to succeeding generations, that religion wanted no other support. When idolatry and wickedness prevailed, the word of prophecy was renewed.

It may seem surprising that God should say nothing to the remnant of mankind about the punishments and rewards of another life, but should make a new covenant with them relating merely to fruitful seasons, &c. All that can be said to this difficulty is, that a gradual working of Providence towards the restoration of mankind is apparent; that the temporal blessings were first restored, as an earnest and pledge of better things to follow: this point enlarged on; and the law of Moses, which was founded on no other express promises and threats but temporal ones, referred to it.

It is shown that, if men had hopes of future blessings before the flood, grounded on the prophecy consequent to the fall, the coming in of the flood could not destroy them, and the covenant of temporal blessings with Noah must greatly have confirmed them.

That Noah had expectations of future deliverance from all

the effects of the curse, and transmitted them to his posterity, seems evident from the peculiar blessing which he gave to Shem. *Blessed*, says he, *be the God of Shem*, &c. Gen. ix. 26. 27. Why the God of Shem, and not the God of Japhet, who was the elder, and equally pious towards his father, &c.? This blessing farther commented on to the end.

DISCOURSE IV.

WE have seen the beginning of prophecy, and its first entrance into the world, and what measure of light and hope it brought with it. The next inquiry is, to examine by what degrees this promise was opened and unfolded in the succeeding ages of the world, and to trace the methods of divine Providence in preparing all things for its accomplishment.

If we consider the first prophecy as the foundation of those hopes in which all the sons of Adam have an interest, in which the ages yet to come, as well as the present and those already past, are concerned; we shall not wonder to find that the administrations of Providence have had in all ages relation to this prophecy, and shall have, till the end of all things brings with it the appointed time for the full accomplishment.

One thing, I presume, will be easily granted, because it cannot be easily denied; that if the ancient prophecies which concern the general state and condition of man with regard either to this world or the next, are indeed divine oracles, there must be a consistency in the whole; and how dark or obscure soever some part of them might be at the first delivery and for generations afterwards, yet must they in the event conspire and centre in that great end which was always in the view of Providence: 'known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world:' Acts xv. 18.

Taking then this prophecy to contain the purpose of God with respect to mankind, the administrations of Providence, together with such farther declarations as God has thought fit to make, must needs be the best comment to help us to its meaning.

The account we have of the antediluvian world is very short, and conveys but little knowlege to us of the religion of those times, or of the hopes and expectations then entertained;

yet something there is to show that the curse of the fall was remembered and felt during that period; and that those who preserved a sense of religion, had an expectation of being delivered from the curse; which could be grounded, as far as appears, on nothing but the prophecy already mentioned.

Noah was born in the eleventh century after the fall, and at the time of his birth his father Lamech, by the spirit of prophecy, declared, 'this same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed:' Gen. v. 19.

This passage is a very material one, and, considered in all its views, will give some light to the state and condition of the world during this period. We may, I think, from hence fairly collect: 1. that the curse on the ground subsisted in all its rigor to the days of Lamech; and that the work and toil necessary to raise from the ground a sufficient support for life, was a grievous and irksome burden. There is no reason to imagine but that Lamech had as good a share of the things of the world as any other in his time; and yet he speaks of the labor and toil of life much more like a man reporting what he had felt than what he had only seen. 2. That there was an expectation in his time, at least among those who had not quite forgotten God, of a deliverance from the curse of the fall. Lamech's prophecy does not introduce this expectation, but is grounded on it: he seems to speak to such as had the same common hope with himself of a deliverance to come, and points out to them the child then born as the instrument designed by Providence to ease them of their burden. 'THIS SAME shall comfort us:' that is, this is the seed of the woman, the heir of the promise, the effect of which shall be seen in his time. 3. That the ancient expectation, founded on the prophecy given at the fall, was not of an immediate and sudden deliverance. Above a thousand years were passed from the curse to the birth of Noah, and yet the expectation of deliverance continued; whereas, had the notion been that the prophecy was to be immediately fulfilled, the delay had been long enough to tire out their patience and their hopes. 4. That the ancient expectation was not that the world should be delivered all at once from the whole curse of the fall. Lamech, who so well

remembered the Lord's curse on the ground, cannot be supposed to forget the greater curse on man: 'dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return:' and yet from this part of the curse he gives no hopes of deliverance. Noah was not the seed who should bring life and immortality to light; of him he only foretells that he should save them from the 'labor and toil of their hands,' and leaves the hopes of deliverance from the greater curse to stand as they did, on the faith of the first prophecy. This notion of a gradual deliverance from the old curse is agreeable to all that has happened since, and to the present state of things under the gospel: it is frequently to be met with in the inspired writers, particularly in St. Paul, who tells us, 'THE LAST enemy that shall be destroyed is death.'

In consequence of this exposition of the prediction of Lamech, it must be maintained that the prophecy has been verified in the event; that the earth has been restored from the curse laid on it at the fall, and now enjoys the effect of the blessing bestowed on Noah. There will arise many prejudices, I am sensible, against this notion now advanced. In the first place, the prophecy which was given at the fall has been usually appropriated to Christ Jesus, and to the deliverance we expect from him by the restoration of life and immortality; and it may be thought perhaps no good service to give any other person a share in this prophecy.

In answer to this I have some few observations to offer: 1. that the curse of the fall manifestly consists of several parts. Man was doomed to a life of labor and sorrow here, the ground cursed for his sake, and he condemned to seek his food in the sweat of his brow; and after this life ended, he was sentenced to return to the dust from whence he was taken. 2. The prophecy given as a support to man under this curse, mentions no kind of deliverance particularly, but conveys a general hope, which is limited to no one circumstance of the curse more than another, and is therefore naturally understood to relate to the whole. 3. Should there appear reason sufficient to induce us to think that this prophecy has already in part had its completion, and that the one part of the curse has been already removed; it will be so far from weakening, that it will mightily support and strengthen our hopes of seeing the whole removed

in God's own time. 4. It ought to be no objection that this prophecy is supposed to point out more events or more persons than one. This is according to the analogy of the ancient prophecies. And why may not this prophecy mean Noah and Christ, as well as many others mean David and Christ, Solomon and Christ, &c.?

Another prejudice will arise from the common notion of the present and past state of the earth. Instead of seeing any alteration for the better, according to the prophecy of Lamech, men think they see an alteration for the worse in every age: nature seems to them to be almost spent and worn out, and less able to provide for her children now than formerly. These are the sentiments of the present age, and they were so of those past. We meet with many reflexions of this kind in grave and serious authors. St. Cyprian, I remember, complains that things were sensibly grown worse even in the compass of his own time; that the seasons of the year were not so pleasant, nor the fruits of the earth so delightful and refreshing as he remembered them. I wonder not at his judgment; for I find myself every day growing into the same opinion. The best and the choicest fruits served up at the tables of the great have no such relish as those which they once provided for themselves when they were young; and many there are who can now find but few days good enough to be abroad, who yet can remember when there were few bad enough to keep them at home. Such observations, therefore, as these, show how much men alter themselves; but they show nothing else.

But this prejudice has a greater support from ancient tradition: we read of a golden age when peace and plenty reigned, when fraud and violence were little known. The old writers to whom we are indebted for this piece of knowlege, set off the story by mixing with it great complaints of their own times; that iron age, as they call it, in which they lived. From these authorities many have been led to think that the curse on the earth has been ever growing and shall grow till the end of all things.

But it ought to be considered that the most ancient writers, to whom we are beholden for these accounts, lived at such a distance of time from the flood, that we may very well sup-

pose that they had little knowlege of any antiquity beyond it. They might well call the times soon after the flood ancient times, for so they were with respect to their own; and there is no pretence for thinking that they knew any thing of the manner of living before the flood. They might possibly have some obscure tradition of the paradisiacal state; but if they had, they confounded it with their golden age, which plainly was a very different thing. Now the ages next the flood afforded ground enough for this ancient tradition, without supposing any such alterations in the state of the earth as are commonly imagined. The earth was in a poor condition indeed after the flood, if it could not afford plenty for the few inhabitants; and what occasion was there for fraud and violence when every man had more than enough? When men increased, and the earth was divided in property, the case altered; some had more than enough, and some much less, and every man grew concerned to be rich, and applied to the arts of fraud or to open violence as they best served his purpose. Here then is the golden age; and here is the iron age. The first happy state continued even to Abraham's time: he and Lot were strangers in the land of Canaan; they had great flocks and herds with them, and yet what plenty did they enjoy? When their servants quarrelled about some conveniences in feeding their cattle, Abraham, as if he had been lord of the whole soil, offers Lot his choice of the country for his cattle. 'Is not the whole land before thee?—If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.' Such a dispute in these days would be attended probably with strife and violence, with fraud and deceit, and perpetual feuds and animosities between the contending parties: in Abraham's time the very plenty the world enjoyed put an end to the quarrel; not that the world is worse now than it was anciently, but men are now so multiplied, and the earth so divided and settled in property, that private men are not left to their choice to settle where they please. Some small parts of the earth, lying near towns and places of habitation, were in Abraham's time possessed in property, as we learn from the purchase which he made of a burying-place.

But he was no purchaser or proprietor of the country where he fed his cattle, and yet he met with no disturbance.

Setting aside, therefore, these prejudices, let us examine what the truth of the case is according to the best light now remaining.

If you consult interpreters for the meaning of Lamech's prediction, some will tell you that Noah found out proper tools and instruments of husbandry, which was a great abatement to the labor and toil of tillage: but of this there is no proof; and it is much more likely that a descendant of Cain's was the inventor of such tools than that Noah was. We read nothing of Noah's skill in this way; but we read of Tubal Cain that he was an 'instructor of every artificer in brass and iron;' and can it be imagined that there were artificers in iron so early as Tubal Cain, and no application of the art to the works of husbandry till Noah's time? Some will tell you that Noah first invented the art of making wine, a liquor that cheers the heart, and makes men forget sorrow and trouble; but neither for this is there any proof. We read that after the flood he 'began to be an husbandman, and planted a vineyard;' but as he was not the first husbandman in the world, so neither can it be concluded from hence that he was the first vine-dresser.

Others are of opinion that there is nothing prophetical in Lamech's declaration, and that he had no view but to the circumstances of his own family. He rejoiced, they say, to see a son born who might in time be assisting to him in the toil of cultivating the ground. According to this interpretation, Noah was so far from being marked out as the person who shall alleviate the labor and toil of the world, that his father rejoiced only that he was come to take his share of it, and to be his fellow-laborer. But is there any thing in this particular to Noah? Is not every son born to assist his father? and may not Lamech's words be applied by every father at the birth of every son? Why then is this speech reported of Lamech only? Why is a peculiar name, with reference to this declaration, given to Noah, if there was no peculiar reason for it?

The Jewish interpreters are generally agreed to expound the

words of Lamech as importing a deliverance to be granted from the labor and toil of tillage occasioned by the curse on the ground; and some of them suppose the words to have a regard to the restoration of the world through Noah and his sons. But the Scripture itself will be our best guide in this case; thither let us go.

Lamech foretells that his son Noah should 'comfort them concerning the works and toil of their hands, because of the ground which the Lord had cursed.' When God informs Noah of his design to destroy the world, he adds, 'but with thee will I establish my covenant.' Lamech expected, in virtue of God's promise, a deliverance from the curse of the earth, and foresees that deliverance would come through his son. When God threatens to destroy the earth, and complete the curse he had lain on it, he thinks on his covenant, and promises Noah the benefit of it. What covenant was this that had such immediate relation to the destruction of the world? What could it be but the very promise which Lamech saw should be made good to Noah, and which is here actually conveyed to Noah by a new promise? The words, 'I will establish my covenant,' must relate to a covenant then subsisting, and not to a covenant afterwards to be made; as will be evident to those who will examine the import of this phrase in Scripture. But to proceed.

The flood being over, God declares, 'I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake.' It appears from this declaration, 1. that the flood was the effect of that curse which was denounced against the earth for man's sake: 2. that the old curse was fully executed and accomplished in the flood. In consequence of which discharge from the curse, a new blessing is immediately pronounced on the earth: 'While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease:' Gen. viii. 22. This is called a covenant between God and the earth, ix. 13. and a covenant with Noah and his seed, and with every living creature, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the field: ver. 8. 9. 10. And in truth a blessing on the earth is properly a blessing not only on man, but on all living creatures which subsist on the earth; and it is with re-

spect to this covenant that the psalmist breaks forth into the admiration of God's goodness: 'Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, thou preservest man and beast:' Psalm xxxvi. 5. 6.

When Adam was first formed and placed on the earth, he had several blessings and privileges conferred on him by God. These were forfeited by the fall. What will you say if you see these very blessings restored again to Noah and his posterity after the flood? Whether this be the case or no, will soon appear on a comparison of the blessings given to one and the other. To Adam and Eve God said, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth:' Gen. i. 28. To Noah and his sons he says, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth:' ix. 1. To our first parents it is said, 'Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth on the earth:' Gen. i. 28. To Noah and his sons he said: 'The fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, and on every fowl of the air, and on all that moveth on the earth, and on all fishes of the sea: into your hand are they delivered:' Gen. ix. 2.

To Adam and Eve are granted for food 'every herb bearing seed; and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed:' Gen. i. 19. Noah and his sons have a larger charter: 'Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you, even as the green herb have I given you all things:' Gen. ix. 3. The blessing on the earth at the creation was, 'Let the earth bring forth grass and herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself on the earth:' Gen. i. 11. The blessing after the flood is, 'While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest shall not cease:' Gen. viii. 22. In the beginning, 'the lights in the firmament were appointed to divide the day from the night, and to be for seasons, and for days and years:' Gen. i. 14. After the flood the new blessing is, 'that cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease:' Gen. viii. 22. Tell me now, what is there bestowed in the first blessings that is wanting in the second? What more did Adam enjoy in his happiest days,

what more did he forfeit in his worst, with respect to this life, than what is contained in these blessings? If he neither had more, nor lost more, all these blessings you see expressly restored to Noah and his posterity; and can you still believe that the curse on the earth remains?

All this laid together amounts, I think, to this; that the old curse on the ground was finished and completed at the deluge. And when the whole race of men, eight only excepted, were destroyed, the serpent had sufficiently bruised the heel of the woman's seed; and the time was come to relieve the world with respect to this part of the curse so fully executed. Accordingly a blessing is once more pronounced on the earth; and a covenant of temporal prosperity confirmed to Noah, and by him to all mankind, making good the prophecy of his father at the time of his birth, 'This same shall comfort us,' &c.

You may think, perhaps, that we see but little effect of this new blessing; that the life of man is still labor and toil; that he still eats the bread of sorrow and carefulness in the sweat of his brow; and that the earth still abounds in thorns and thistles. Such complaints as these are but the effect of prejudice: men speak in this case as if they thought there were no thorns and thistles till after the fall, but that they were created on purpose to be a curse; for if there were such things (as undoubtedly there were before the fall), why should you expect to have them removed by the restoration of the earth?

For what employment do you imagine man was made? For 'a little sleep, a little slumber, and a little folding of the hands to sleep?' Surely this was not the case: even in paradise it was Adam's business to dress and to keep the garden. How much labor this required we cannot tell; some it required, without doubt. After the fall labor increased and multiplied, and continued to be very burdensome unto the time of the flood; and God's promise of regular seasons after the flood seems to intimate that they were very irregular and confused before; which one circumstance will account for all the change we suppose. What the case was in the old world during the curse, may probably be collected from the curse denounced against Israel when disobedient: 'I will break the pride of their power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your

earth as brass, and your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits:' Levit. xxvi. 19. 20.

There are serious writers who think that the earth was very much damaged and rendered less fertile by the flood; but is it not obvious to observe that this judgment ought to be grounded on the knowlege not only of the present state of the earth, but also of the state before the flood? For whoever compares two things together, and judges on the comparison, must be supposed to know them both; and yet it is certain that we know nothing of the antediluvian state but this only, that it was a very bad one; which is not enough to support us in judging that the present state is a much worse.

We meet with frequent allusions to this covenant with Noah in later times and later books of Scripture: the Son of Sirach tells us, 'that an everlasting covenant was made with him:' xliv. 18. διαθῆκαι αἰῶνος, Gr.: *testamenta seculi*, Vulg. The covenant of the age was given him; for Noah was the father of the age, and had the covenant of the age after the flood, in like manner as Christ was the father, and brought in the new covenant of the succeeding age.

The prophet Jeremiah introduces God appealing to his own fidelity in the execution of his first covenant, as a reason why he ought to be trusted and relied on for the performance of the second. 'If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night,—then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign on his throne:' xxxiii. 20. 21. 25. In like manner the prophet Isaiah: 'This is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee:' liv. 9. The lxvth Psalm seems to be a comment on God's covenant with Noah: 'thou makest the outgoing of the morning and evening to rejoice. Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness. The pastures are clothed with flocks; the vallies also are covered with corn; they shout forth joy, they also sing.' It seems also to be with reference to this covenant that the Psalmist appeals to God's

faithfulness in the clouds, to his mercy established in the heavens, and to the moon, the faithful witness in heaven. Wisdom, and power, and goodness are shown forth in the creation, but mercy and faithfulness relate to God's dealings with men; and when we hear of his faithfulness in the clouds, it naturally leads us to think of his promise for seed-time and harvest, for the former and the latter rain; things evidently depending on the government of the clouds.

During the age of this covenant, the character by which God was known and applied to was relative to this covenant and the blessings of it: 'Unto God would I commit my cause, which doth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number; who giveth rain on the earth, and sendeth waters on the fields:' Job v. 8. 9. 10. 'Sing praises on the harp unto our God, who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow on the mountains. He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry:' Psalm cxlvii. 7. 8. 9.—'Let us now fear the Lord our God that giveth rain, both the former and the latter in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest:' Jer. v. 24. To the same purpose, and with respect to the same times, the Apostles Paul and Barnabas tell the people at Lystra, 'that God in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness:' Acts xiv. 17. Our blessed Saviour does likewise commend and extol the mercy of God in the works of this first covenant: 'He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.' Which words are directly a comment on the terms of Noah's covenant for fruitful seasons, which were to continue without being interrupted again for the sake of man's iniquity; or, as the text itself expresses it, 'though the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth:' Gen. viii. 21. With respect to this covenant of temporal blessings given to Noah, and to the second covenant of future glory given to Christ, must St. Paul be understood to speak, when he says, 'godliness is profitable to all things,

having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.' In any other view the words are capable of no exposition consistent with experience, or with the admonitions of the gospel, which warn the righteous to expect sufferings in this world: but true it is, that for godliness-sake the promise of the life that now is was confirmed with Noah; and for the same reason was the covenant of better hopes confirmed with Christ.

These allusions and many more suppose a restoration of the earth after the flood, and a new blessing given to it in virtue of God's covenant; and without this supposition I know not how to account for some passages in Scripture, which speak of the goodness of the earth, and the great plenty it affords. How comes it to pass that this very earth, cursed with barrenness, and to be a nursery for thorns and thistles, is afterwards represented as flowing with milk and honey, abounding with oil and wine, and every thing useful and pleasant in life? Can you imagine this land of plenty to be part of the cursed earth, doomed to bear thorns and thistles, and to weary out its inhabitants with toil and labor? Yet this is the case, if no alteration has happened; and it will be no easy work to reconcile these contradictions. But if the curse on the earth was expiated at the flood; if the earth has been once more blessed by its Creator, there wants no art or invention to solve this difficulty: the thing speaks for itself.

I will leave this point on these reasons: whether they are sufficient to establish an opinion so contrary to the prejudices of mankind I know not; they seem to me at least to be worth considering.

Let us consider now the state of prophecy after the flood, and on what foot the religion of the new world subsisted.

I find no new prophecy given to Noah after the flood, nor to any of his children till the call of Abraham. The reason of it seems to be this: the power and sovereignty of God were so manifestly displayed in the deluge, and made so strong impressions on the few persons then alive, and came so well attested to the succeeding generation, that religion wanted no other support: when idolatry prevailed, and the world was in

danger of being quite lost to true religion without the interposition of God, the word of prophecy was renewed; as we shall find when we come to that period.

It may seem surprising perhaps, that after so great a revolution in the world as the deluge made, God should say nothing to the remnant of mankind of the punishments and rewards of another life, but should make a new covenant with them relating merely to fruitful seasons and the blessings of the earth. All that I can say to this difficulty is this; I think I see plainly a gradual working of Providence towards the redemption of the world from the curse of the fall; that the temporal blessings were first restored as an earnest and pledge of better things to follow; that the covenant of the age given to Noah had, strictly speaking, nothing to do with the hopes of futurity, which were reserved to be the matter of another covenant in another age, and to be revealed by him, whose province it was 'to bring life and immortality to light through the gospel.'

The law of Moses, though a divine revelation, and introduced to serve and advance the great ends of Providence with respect to mankind, yet being given in the age of the first covenant, was in all things made conformable to it; and was founded in no other express promises than those of temporal happiness and prosperity, in no other express threatening than those of temporal loss and misery. Abraham's temporal covenant was the same in kind with Noah's, though much enlarged and re-established on farther promises and assurances: as the curse on the ground for the wickedness of Cain was of the very same kind with the curse of the fall; differing from it not in kind, but in degree.

But though the first covenant, given to Noah, and the law of Moses founded on the terms of that covenant, contain no express promises of future rewards, yet is it not to be imagined that all who lived under this covenant were void of such hopes and expectations. If there were any such hopes before the flood, grounded on the prophecy consequent to the fall, the coming in of the flood could not destroy them; and the covenant of temporal blessings given to Noah was so far from superseding better hopes, that it did mightily strengthen and confirm them. For if Noah and his forefathers expected deli-

verance from the whole curse of the fall, the actual deliverance from one part of it was a very good pledge of a farther deliverance to be expected in due time. Man himself was cursed as well as the ground; he was doomed to return to dust; and fruitful seasons are but a small relief compared to the greatness of his loss; but when fruitful seasons came, and one part of the curse was evidently abated, it gave great assurance that the other should not last for ever.

That Noah had such expectations himself and transmitted them to his posterity, seems evident from the peculiar blessing which he bestowed on Shem. 'Blessed,' says he, 'be the Lord God of Shem: Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem:' Gen. ix. 26. 27. Why the God of Shem, and not the God of Japhet? As to the behavior of these two sons towards their father, it was the same; they joined in the pious office done to him; in this respect then they were equal and equally deserving of a blessing: if any preference was due to either from the father, it was to Japhet his first-born; for so he was, though commonly last named when the sons of Noah are mentioned together. This being the case, how comes Shem to be preferred? and what is the blessing conveyed to him? The temporal covenant it could not be, for that was before confirmed with all the sons of Noah. Day and night, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, were a common gift to the world, bestowed, as our blessed Lord observes, 'on the evil as well as on the good.' The blessing therefore peculiar to Shem was no part of the temporal covenant; nor was it any thing in the power of his father to bestow; for then his elder brother, equally obedient and respectful to his father, must have been served before him. Of what other blessing Noah had any notion, can never be imagined, unless we seek for it among the hopes he conceived of farther deliverance from the curse, grounded on the divine promise that the 'seed of the woman' should finally prevail; the right to which promise was conveyed to him before the flood, 'with thee will I establish my covenant:' Gen. vi. 18. For Noah had not only the temporal covenant given to him and his sons, but he was also, as the Apostle to the Hebrews tell us, 'heir of the righteousness

which is by faith:' xi. 7. If this be the case, then Noah's blessing is like unto Lamech's prophecy; for as Lamech foresaw that Noah should receive from God the covenant of the earth's restoration; so Noah foresaw that the greater blessing still behind, even the covenant that should restore man to himself and to his Maker, should be conveyed through the posterity of Shem. This accounts for the preference given to Shem; for Noah spoke not his own choice, but declared the counsel of God, who had now, as he frequently did afterwards, chosen the younger before the elder.

SUMMARY OF DISCOURSE V.

WE are now advancing to times of greater light; to clearer and more distinct prophecies, and more nearly relating to God's great dispensation of mercy, manifested by the revelation of his Son. This period begins at the call of Abraham, and runs through the law and the prophets, ending where the gospel of Christ commences. It embraces a greater variety and number of prophecies than can be comprised in these short discourses; but it may be useful to point out the great and general design of Providence in them, &c.

How soon the world after the deluge lost the knowlege of the true God, we cannot certainly know; but this we know, that in Abraham's time idolatry had spread far and wide, and taken deep root even in the family of Shem. Hence it is highly probable that true religion would have intirely failed in the world, had not God visibly interposed to preserve such a sense of it as was necessary for the accomplishment of his great design to restore mankind.

It may be said *necessary* to this end, for it is evident that it was not the intention of Providence in the call of Abraham, or in giving the law to Moses, to propagate or restore true religion among all nations of the old world: this point fully explained. These interpositions were merely subservient to some other view.

If we consider the whole world as lost to religion, estranged from God, and void of hope, and then suppose *one* family chosen to be delivered, merely for their own sakes, this gives so mean and partial a view of God, that no religion can subsist with it.

But if the law of Moses was intended to be neither a general law for mankind, nor yet as a partial favor to the Jews only, what remains but that we must consider it as a method of Providence working towards the great end always in view? as the opening of that scene which was to restore mankind, and bring a blessing on all nations? Accordingly we find this to be the case: when Abraham was called, he received assurance not only of peculiar temporal blessings to himself and his posterity, but also of a general blessing to be conveyed through him to all mankind: *I will make of thee*, says God, *a great nation, and I will bless thee*, &c.; and then it immediately follows, *And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed:* Gen. xii. 2. It is of great importance, in the present question, to distinguish rightly between these promises. Accordingly they are fully commented on and distinguished. The promise of temporal prosperity to Abraham and his posterity is sufficiently explained in the course of his story; but this promise was derived from the temporal covenant established with Noah and his sons after the flood, in which other nations had a share as well as himself, and some of them, in some respects, a much greater. But if we look forward, we shall see the distinction between the several promises grow plain, when God renews the covenant, and limits the peculiar blessing of Abraham to the son which should be born of Sarah his wife. In the seventeenth chapter of Genesis it is said, *I will make a covenant between me and thee, and I will multiply thee exceedingly: and thou shalt be a father of many nations.* And at the 7th and 8th verses God promises to establish an everlasting covenant with him and his seed after him; to give him and them all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and to be their God. Here are either two covenants, or else the same covenant repeated, with this difference, that in the last place it is styled an everlasting one, and the land of Canaan is assigned for an everlasting possession, with this remarkable addition, that God

promises to be the God of Abraham and of his seed after him. And this is the first time that this peculiar character assumed by God occurs in Scripture, and it is evidently connected with the everlasting covenant; and this indicates two distinct covenants as mentioned in this place. This subject carried on. The everlasting covenant was established with Isaac the son of Sarah, and not with Ishmael the son of Hagar, though he fully partook of the temporal promises, and was admitted to the benefit of the temporal covenant as well as Isaac. This distinction between the two covenants is the foundation of St. Paul's argument to the Galatians: *It is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman*, &c.

Since then the promises of temporal prosperity to Abraham and his seed are distinct from the subject matter of the everlasting covenant made with him, and limited to Isaac and Jacob, and afterwards to the tribe of Judah and family of David, it remains to see what the subject of the covenant so limited is.

If we look back to the call of Abraham, and the promises that attend it, we shall find one blessing added, in which all the world has an interest, and which was to be conveyed to them through Abraham and his seed. *In thee*, says God, *shall all the families of the earth be blessed.* Whatever Abraham understood by this, he surely could not understand it as his children at this day understand it; who expect, in virtue of the promises, to have dominion over all people; which indeed would be a strange kind of blessing to them, thus to lose their liberty, and become subject to the dominion of one nation! But before we inquire into the special meaning of this blessing on all nations, we must see whether it were truly the matter of God's special, everlasting covenant with Abraham.

Ishmael, as we have seen, was excluded from this special covenant, and Isaac admitted to it. Both are admitted to the

temporal covenant; but the covenant with Isaac renews this very promise: *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed:* Gen. xxvi. 4.—a plain proof that the special matter of God's covenant, limited from Abraham to Isaac, and exclusive of Ishmael, consisted in the promise of this universal blessing. We have the like evidence from a like case between the children of Isaac, Esau, and Jacob. The blessing of Abraham was limited to Jacob, and denied to Esau; yet Esau received a temporal blessing from his father as well as Jacob: this case enlarged on. The profaneness which the Apostle to the Hebrews attributes to Esau in selling his birthright, accounted for by his selling the blessing of Abraham. The limitation of Jacob's blessing on Esau, *thou shalt serve thy brother*, commented on and explained. It appears therefore that the blessing given to Jacob, and expressed in words implying, *rule over his brethren*, was truly a conveyance of the birthright to him in the family of Abraham; that the birthright in Abraham's family respected the special blessing and covenant given to Abraham by God; that Isaac himself calls this right of primogeniture in his house *the blessing of Abraham;* that God himself, in confirmation of Jacob's right of primogeniture, assures him that *in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*

Now this promise being the only special promise made to Isaac and Jacob in preference to their brethren, and in consequence of God's everlasting covenant limited to them, this promise must necessarily be understood to be the subject-matter of the everlasting covenant. False interpretation of this promise by some commentators exposed. What distinct notion Abraham had of the blessing promised to all nations through him and his seed, as well as of the manner and method by which it should be effected, we cannot pretend to say; but that he understood it to mean a deliverance of mankind from

the curse of the fall, there can be little doubt: this fully shown.

To preserve the hopes of this restoration in the world, and the expectation of future life and immortality, was Abraham called from his own country, then tainted with idolatry, to be a witness to God and his truth. Without this, the knowlege of God had been lost, and the remembrance of his creating man at first, and the hopes of a second and better creation after the fall. Abraham was not called for his own sake; much less were his stiff-necked posterity preserved for their own sakes, but that both parties might be instruments in the hands of God in the redemption and restoration of the world. The great article of the covenant, limited to Abraham and his chosen seed, evidently regarded the whole human race, and was to grow, in fulness of time, into a blessing on all nations. He and his posterity were depositories of these hopes; for the Jews' chief advantage above others was, *that unto them were committed the oracles of God.*

This account will help us to a distinct view of the prophecies relating to the period of time of which we are speaking: this point enlarged on.

Many of the ancient prophecies relate to both covenants; hence it comes to pass that at the first appearance many ancient predictions seem to be hardly consistent with themselves, but to be made up of ideas which can never unite in one person or in one event. Thus the promises to David of a son to succeed in his throne, have some circumstances which are applicable only to Solomon and temporal dominion over Israel; some which are peculiar to that Son of David, who was heir of an everlasting kingdom: hence it is that we often find the promise of temporal felicity and deliverance raised so high that none can answer the description; the thoughts and expressions of the prophets naturally moving from the blessings of one covenant

to those of the other, &c. Nor is it to be wondered at that they often speak of both kingdoms together, or make use of the temporal deliverances as an argument to encourage hopes of the spiritual; since the temporal deliverances being the actual performance of one covenant, were a great security for the performance of the other: and it would have been unnatural to see the hand of God performing one promise, without reflecting on the certainty of his performing the other.

The blessings belonging to the special covenant with Abraham and his seed were reserved to be revealed in God's appointed time. The prophets under the law could not be commissioned to declare them openly, without anticipating the time of their revelation: hence it is that the predictions concerning Christ and his kingdom are clothed in figures proper to raise the hopes and attention of the people, without carrying them beyond the bounds of knowlege prescribed to the age of the Jewish covenant.

If each kind of prophecy be considered distinctly by itself, it will be more clearly seen how this case stands.

Abraham was called from his father's house, on a promise that he should become a great nation, and that his seed should possess the land of Canaan. This promise could not be fulfilled in all its parts, till Abraham's family was multiplied into a nation. This required many years; and what must become of these children of promise in the mean time, who had no country of their own wherein to settle and multiply? Without launching out into speculations on the methods of Providence, let any one read the prophecies from the call of Abraham to Moses, and he will see evidently that they refer to this state of things: this point made out. The times of Moses and of Joshua, those days of miracles as well as prophecies, want no explication: the intention of Providence appears plain in every step.

The commonwealth of Israel was raised, and flourished,

under the temporal covenant, given at first to Noah; and in a particular manner, with additional promises, confirmed to Abraham and his seed: for this reason all the promises and threatenings of the law are temporal, suitable to the age and season of the world. But these temporal blessings and punishments were so visibly administered by the hand of God, that every execution of the threats and promises of the law became a new proof of its divine authority. If it be asked why God did so visibly interpose in their temporal affairs, the answer may be thus given: No other nation ever had a divine law given on the establishment of temporal blessings and punishments; and therefore God had not so bound himself to any other nation, to account to them for their temporal prosperity and adversity: but to the Jews, with whom he had established a law and a covenant on temporal promises, he stood obliged to make good his word, and to justify himself to them in the administration of temporal affairs. For this reason a succession of prophets was raised up among them, at whose mouths they might receive the direction of God; and this is what Moses means in Deut. iv. 7.

That they might not be tempted by the prosperity of other nations and their own adversity to fall away to other gods, they were forewarned of the things that were to befal them; their calamities were prophetically described to them, that they might know, whenever they suffered, that it was the very hand of their own God that was on them: hence it is that we find so many prophecies, under the law, relating to the civil state of the Jews: for this cause the great captivity of Babylon is so largely and fully foretold by the prophets, that the people might not be tempted to think that the gods of the nations had prevailed against them, and thereby be seduced to forsake God in their distress; but might know that his hand was in all their sufferings; might become humble and obedient; and farther, might know that all their adversity and prosperity

came on them according to the express terms of their covenant with God: this point enlarged on.

Hence we may account for all the prophecies of the Old Testament relating to the temporal state of the Jewish nation; with which we have no farther concern than only to give a reasonable account of them.

The people of the Jews were so prone to idolatry, following the customs of the nations around them, that to the times of the captivity there was a perpetual struggle between the prophets of God and the false prophets of other nations, which should prevail: with this view are many ancient prophecies given, to preserve the people from being seduced by the surrounding nations: see 2 Kings i. 3. 4. and Isaiah xlviii. 3-5. We see therefore on what ground all the prophecies in the Old Testament stand, which relate to the temporal concerns of the Jewish nation; and also why this kind of prophecy has ceased in the Christian church. The gospel is not founded in temporal promises; so far from it, we are called on to take up our cross, &c. Those prophecies relating to the things of this life concern us but little; they have long had their completion in events which affect us not: but others there are, relating to the great *depositum* intrusted to the Jews, even the hopes of redemption, to be a blessing to all the earth; and these deserve our particular consideration.

DISCOURSE V.

To what purposes the ancient prophecies were given, and on what foot religion stood from the beginning to the restoration or new establishment of the world in Noah and his posterity, has been already considered. We are now advancing to times of greater light, to clearer and more distinct prophecies, and more nearly relating to God's great dispensation of mercy and goodness towards mankind, manifested by the revelation of his son. This period begins at the call of Abraham, and runs through the law and the prophets, ending where the gospel of Christ Jesus commences. It contains such a variety and number of prophecies, that I cannot propose to myself so large and extensive a subject to be the matter of short discourses from this place. But it may perhaps be of some use to inquisitive minds, to suggest to them the great and general design of Providence in the prophecies of this period; to show them the state of religion during this season, and how well the light of prophecy afforded to this generation corresponded to the state and necessity of the times. If in this method of inquiring we can arrive at the knowlege of God's design in giving the word of prophecy to the old world, we shall the more easily discern of what use these ancient oracles are to the present world; and how far the truth of the gospel which we believe and profess, depends on the authority and evidence of ancient prophecy. In order to this inquiry, it is necessary, first, to consider the state of true religion and the supports it had during this period; for prophecy being relative to the state of religion in the world, we must know the one to understand the other.

How soon the world after the deluge corrupted their ways, and lost the knowlege of the true God, 'and changed the glory of the incorruptible—into an image made like to corruptible man,' we cannot certainly know; but this we certainly know,

that in Abraham's time idolatry had spread far and wide, and taken deep root even in the family of Shem, and in that branch of it particularly from which Abraham descended. This being the case, it is highly probable that true religion had intirely failed in the world, had not God visibly interposed to preserve such a sense of it as was necessary for the accomplishment of his great design to restore mankind.

Necessary I say to this end; for most evident it is, that it was not the intention of Providence in the call of Abraham, or in giving the law of Moses, to propagate or restore true religion among all nations of the old world; so far from it, that the covenant with Abraham is founded on the condition, not of reforming, but of destroying the idolatrous nations in the land of Canaan; and the sign of circumcising was given to separate Abraham and his posterity from the rest of mankind, which shows that the rest of mankind were not called to that covenant of which circumcision was the sign or sacrament. Moreover the law of Moses was established in such rites and ceremonies, and many of them to be performed only in the land of Canaan, that there is no room to suppose that it was ever intended to be a general law for mankind. Add to this what Paul and Barnabas tell the people at Lystra, that 'God in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways:' Acts xiv. 16. and what St. Paul says to the people of Athens, 'God winked at the times of ignorance, but now commandeth all men every where to repent:' Acts xvii. 30. and it will be most evident that the call of Abraham, and the law of Moses consequent to it, were not intended as general calls to mankind, but were subservient to some other view and design of Providence.

If we consider now the whole world lost to all sense of religion, estranged from God, and void of all hopes towards him; and suppose one family chosen out merely for their own sakes to be delivered from the general corruption and misery, without any view or design towards the general good of mankind, it gives so mean, so partial a view of God, that I think no religion can consist with such a notion.

But if the law of Moses was neither intended to be a general law for mankind, nor yet intended as a partial favor and benefit

to the Jews only exclusive of all mankind, what remains but that we must consider it as a method of Providence working towards the great end always in view, the general restoration of mankind from the curse of the fall? as the opening of that scene which was to bring a blessing on all nations of the earth? Accordingly we find this to be the case: when Abraham was called and received the promises, he had assurances given him not only of peculiar blessings to himself and posterity, but likewise of a general blessing to be conveyed through him to all mankind: 'I will make of thee,' says God 'a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee.' Immediately it follows, 'And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed:' Gen. xii. 2. It is of great importance in the present question to distinguish rightly these promises.

The promise of temporal prosperity to Abraham and his posterity is sufficiently explained in the course of his story. At the seventh verse of this chapter God tells him 'he would give to his seed the land of Canaan;' and in chap. xv. 18. that he would give the land unto his seed 'from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:' in the seventeenth chapter, that 'he would multiply him exceedingly; that he should be a father of many nations, and kings should come out of him.' These were great promises and great inducements to obedience; but except the particular gift of the land of Canaan (and there were probably other parts of the world as good as that), there was nothing in them peculiar to Abraham and his posterity only. There were before Abraham's time, and have been since, many great and powerful nations of another kindred; the sons of Ham and Japhet, and those descended by other branches from Shem, have arrived to great prosperity, and left a numerous issue behind them, in virtue of the common blessing bestowed on their ancestors after the flood, to whom God said, 'Be ye fruitful and multiply, and bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein:' to them likewise he gave the promise of fruitful seasons, and sustained them with corn and with wine. Thus far then the promise to Abraham was derived from the temporal covenant established

with Noah and his sons after the flood, in which other nations and people had a share as well as himself; and some of them in some respects a much greater, as he must needs judge who knows any thing of the ancient or present empires of the east and west. But if we look forward, we shall see the distinction between the several promises grow plain, when God renews the covenant, and limits the peculiar blessing of Abraham to the son which should be born of Sarah his wife. In the seventeenth of Genesis the Lord appears to Abraham and says, 'I am the Almighty God: walk before me, and be thou perfect:' then follows, 'I will make my covenant between me and thee, and I will multiply thee exceedingly; and thou shalt be a father of many nations.' At the 7th and 8th verses God promises to establish an everlasting covenant with him, and his seed after him, to give him and them all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and to be their God.' Here are either two covenants mentioned together in the compass of a few lines, or else the same covenant repeated, with this difference, that in the last place it is styled an everlasting covenant, and the land of Canaan is assigned for an everlasting possession; with this remarkable addition, that God promises to be the God of Abraham, and of his seed after him. And this is the first time that this peculiar character assumed by God, of being the God of Abraham and of his seed, occurs in Scripture; and it is evidently connected to the promise of the everlasting covenant; which connexion seems to be the true foundation of our Saviour's argument from this expression, to prove the resurrection of the dead; as the connexion of the promise of the land of Canaan to the everlasting covenant seems to be the reason of treating the land of Canaan as a type or sign of heaven. This character of God, thus connected to the everlasting covenant, is likewise a plain intimation that two distinct covenants are mentioned in this place, and not the same repeated again. Towards the close of this chapter, Abraham receives an express promise that he should have a son by Sarah his wife within the compass of a year, and that the everlasting covenant should be established with his son and his seed after him. Abraham had at this time a son of thirteen years old,

born of Hagar the Egyptian; to whom the angel of the Lord had appeared when she was with child of this son, and promised to 'multiply her seed exceedingly, that it should not be numbered for multitude:' Gen. xvi. 10. This promise therefore of a numerous posterity florishing in the earth, though part of the promise given to Abraham, as we have seen before, is no part of the everlasting covenant confirmed to Isaac, exclusively to all the natural sons of Abraham. This appears likewise from the very passage where this promise is limited to Isaac. Abraham, when he received the promise of a son by his wife, puts up a petition, whatever the occasion of it was, for his son Ishmael; 'O that Ishmael might live before thee!' To which he receives this answer: 'As for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly: twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.' Immediately it follows, 'But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee.' Can any thing be plainer to show that the everlasting covenant, to be established with Isaac and his seed, was of a very different kind from the covenant given to Ishmael, of multiplying his seed, of making him father of kings and princes, and of raising him into a great nation? And yet this very covenant was given originally to Abraham; he was to have a numerous posterity, to be father of kings, and of a great nation. Ishmael was admitted to the benefit of this covenant as well as Isaac, and yet expressly excluded from that which God emphatically styles MY covenant, and the everlasting covenant; an undeniable evidence that God's covenant with Abraham was founded on better hopes than those of mere temporal prosperity. This distinction of two covenants in the case of Ishmael and Isaac, made by God himself, is the foundation of St. Paul's argument to the Galatians: 'It is written,' says he, 'that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman: but he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise: which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants.' And whoever is capable of considering what is related concerning this matter

in the Book of Genesis, will evidently see that these are indeed two covenants; and two such covenants as fully justify the Apostle's reasoning on this point.

Since then the promises of temporal prosperity made to Abraham and his seed after him are evidently distinct from the subject-matter of the everlasting covenant made with him, and limited to Isaac and Jacob, and afterwards to the tribe of Judah, and lastly to the family of David; it remains to be considered what the subject of the covenant so limited is. If we look back to the call of Abraham, and the promises which attend it, there we shall find that, after enumerating the temporal blessings which were to descend from Abraham to his posterity, one blessing is added, in which all the world has an interest, and which was to be conveyed to them through Abraham and his seed: 'In thee,' says God, 'shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' Whatever Abraham understood by this, I think verily he could not understand it as his children at this day understand it, who expect, in virtue of the promises made to the fathers, to be lords of the world, and to have dominion over all people. A strange blessing this to all nations, that they should fall from their natural liberty, and become subject to the dominion of one people! None but a Jew can see the happiness of such a state; the nations of the earth, if left to their choice, would all refuse this great blessing for themselves. But before we inquire into the special meaning of this blessing on all nations, we must see whether this universal blessing, to be revealed in due time, were truly the matter of God's special, his everlasting covenant with Abraham. We have seen already that Ishmael was excluded from this special covenant, and Isaac admitted to it; we have the covenant of God with Ishmael, and the covenant of God as renewed with Isaac, both preserved in the Book of Genesis; and it is observed that the two covenants as to worldly prosperity are nearly the same. But they differ in this: the covenant with Ishmael says nothing of the blessing to all nations; the covenant with Isaac expressly renews this very promise: 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed:' Gen. xxvi. 4.—a plain proof, surely, that the special matter of God's covenant, limited from Abraham to Isaac exclusive

of Ishmael, consisted in the promise of this universal blessing, to be conveyed through Abraham and Isaac and their posterity to all mankind.

We have the like evidence from a like case, which happened between the children of Isaac; with this only difference, that Ishmael and Isaac were born, one of a bondwoman, the other of a free; but Esau and Jacob were twins of one birth, both born of a free woman. The blessing of Abraham was limited to Jacob, and denied to Esau; yet Esau received a temporal blessing from his father, as well as Jacob. The Apostle to the Hebrews accounts it profaneness in Esau that he sold his birthright; it must be because he sold the blessing of Abraham, and the promises of God: on any other account there is no room for his charge, for it was never reckoned profaneness to sell mere temporal rights; nor was Esau excluded from the benefit of the temporal promises by this scandalous bargain. If Jacob was blessed with the 'dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine,' Gen. xxvii. 28. Esau's blessing in this respect was not inferior: 'Thy dwelling,' says his father, 'shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above:' ver. 39. If 'nations were to bow down to Jacob,' ver. 29. Esau likewise was to live and prevail by his sword: ver. 40. If Jacob's brethren were to bow down to him, ver. 29. yet the time would come when Esau should have dominion, and break even this yoke from off his neck: ver. 40. Thus the case stands between them, if we interpret the whole blessing given to Jacob of temporal prosperity and dominion; but there is great reason to limit part of it to the peculiar blessing of Abraham and Isaac, which was undoubtedly conveyed at this time to Jacob. The conveying the birthright in the family of Abraham was conveying the special blessing of Abraham, which always attended on the birthright. This birthright was evidently made over to Jacob, when it was said, 'be lord over thy brethren.' The special blessing was in time to be extended to all nations as well as to the house of Abraham, for in his seed all the families of the earth were to be blessed; and therefore in consequence of the birthright it is said to Jacob, 'Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee:' ver. 29. It is

very evident from the whole story of Isaac's blessing his two sons, that the chief blessing he had to bestow fell on Jacob; and it is as plain that there are no words to limit this particular blessing to Jacob but these now under consideration; and Isaac himself understood that he had passed away the blessing of Abraham to Jacob in these words, and therefore he tells Esau that the blessing was gone beyond recovery, 'I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed:' ver. 33. But Esau pressed his father for a blessing on himself: 'Isaac answered and said, Behold I have made him thy Lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?' ver. 37. Esau still urges his father; 'bless me, even me also, O my father.' On this Isaac blesses him; and pray observe: of corn and wine and temporal power he gives him a full and an equal share: 'thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above:' the only limitation on the blessing is, 'thou shalt serve thy brother.' Whatever then was peculiarly given to Jacob, was contained in the grant of being lord over his brethren; and what this peculiar gift was, we may learn from Isaac himself, who in the next chapter renews the blessing on Jacob, and gives expressly to him and his seed the blessing of Abraham: ver. 4. In the same chapter the blessing is renewed and confirmed by God himself: 'In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed:' ver. 14.

That the regard of all nations to the seed in which they were 'all to be blessed,' should be expressed by 'their bowing down to him,' is no hard figure of speech; that even this yoke, this superiority of Abraham's family, should one day be broken, as the promise to Esau sets forth, when Jews and Gentiles should be on an equal foot and equally the people of God, is no more than the original covenant contains; for the day was to come when all nations should be equally blessed.

If you expound this blessing of temporal dominion, see how the case will stand. Jacob is to rule over Esau; yet no sooner is the blessing given, but he flies his country for fear of Esau: Gen. xxvii. 43. &c. He lives abroad for many years; and when he returns, the fear and dread of his brother returns

with him: he 'was greatly afraid and distressed:' Gen. xxxii. 7. His only refuge in this distress was to God; 'deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau:' ver. 11. When he sends a message to him he styles himself, 'thy servant Jacob:' ver. 20. When he met him, 'he bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to Esau:' xxxiii. 3. When he speaks to him he calls him Lord; when he was kindly received by Esau, he says, 'I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me:' ver. 10. What is there in all this to show the rule and dominion that was given to Jacob over his mother's sons?

If you suppose the prophecy understood of temporal dominion to be fulfilled in the posterity of these two brothers, let us see how the case stands on this supposition. The family of Esau was settled in power and dominion many years before Jacob's family had any certain dwelling-place; the dukes and kings of Esau's house are reckoned up, Gen. xxxvi. and the historian tells us, 'these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel:' ver. 31. When the appointed time was come for establishing the house of Israel, and giving them the land and possessions of their enemies, the family of Esau were by a particular decree exempted from the dominion of Israel: 'the Lord spake unto Moses, Command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir, and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore, meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no not so much as a foot breadth, because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession:' Deut. ii. 4. 5. If in the time of David 'they of Edom became his servants,' 2 Sam. viii. 14. yet in the days of Jehoram did they recover again, 'and made a king over themselves:' 2 Kings viii. 20. And in the time of Ahaz they revenged the affront by 'smiting Judah, and leading away captives:' 2 Chron. xxviii. 17. Can you now suppose that this variety of fortune between the children of Jacob and Esau was the thing intended, or meant to be described, when the promise was given to Jacob, that 'his mother's children

should bow down to him?' If this were the case, Isaac needed not to be so scrupulous in preserving the peculiar blessing to Jacob; he might have given Esau a share of it, and the event would have answered.

It appears, I think, from hence, that the blessing given to Jacob, and expressed in words implying a 'rule over his brethren,' was truly a conveyance of the birthright to him in the family of Abraham; that the birthright in Abraham's family respected the special blessing and covenant given to Abraham by God; that Isaac himself calls this right of primogeniture in his house 'the blessing of Abraham;' that God himself, in confirmation of Jacob's right of primogeniture, assures him that 'in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'

Now this promise being the only special promise made to Isaac and Jacob in preference to their brethren, and in consequence of God's everlasting covenant limited to them, this promise must necessarily be understood to be the subject-matter o the everlasting covenant; and it is very observable that thi blessing so peculiarly belongs to this covenant, that it is never mentioned with respect to any other person whatever, than such only to whom the right of this covenant and the promise of the land of Canaan descended. Some interpreters have imagined that these words require no higher sense than this, that all nations should see the prosperity of Abraham and his seed so evidently, that they should bless themselves and others in some such form as this: 'God make thee as great as Abraham and his seed.' But can we imagine that God's everlasting covenant, as he himself calls it, was given only to produce a proverbial form of speech in the world? that the prerogative of Isaac above Ishmael, of Jacob above Esau, lay in this only, that the nations should use the name of one in their mutual good wishes, and not of the other? Besides, when was this ever the case? when did all nations thus bless themselves, or when was there occasion for it? The posterity of Ishmael was established in power much sooner, and were as great and successful for many ages as the Jews, and much larger empires have sprung from them: so that there was hardly ever any ground to take up this proverbial speech, which some make to be the whole

of this special covenant limited from Abraham to Isaac and Jacob.

What distinct notion Abraham had of the blessing promised to all nations through him and his seed; what he thought of the manner and method by which it should be effected, we cannot pretend to say; but that he understood it to be a promise of restoring mankind, and delivering them from the remaining curse of the fall, there can be little doubt. He knew that death had entered by sin; he knew that God had promised victory and redemption to the seed of the woman. On the hopes of this restoration the religion of his ancestors was founded; and when God, from whom this blessing on all men was expected, did expressly promise a blessing on all men, and in this promise founded his everlasting covenant, what could Abraham else expect but the completion in his seed of that ancient promise and prophecy concerning the victory to be obtained by the woman's seed? The curse of the ground was expiated by the flood, and the earth restored with a blessing, which was the foundation of the temporal covenant with Noah; a large share of which God expressly grants to Abraham and his posterity particularly, together with a promise, by their means, to bring a new and farther blessing on the whole race of men. Lay these things together, and say what less could be expected from the new promise or prophecy given to Abraham, than a deliverance from that part of the curse still remaining on man, 'Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return?' In virtue of this covenant, Abraham and his posterity had reason to expect that the time would come when man should 'be called from his dust again:' for this expectation they had his assurance who gave the covenant, that he would be their God for ever. Well might our Saviour then tell the sons of Abraham, that even Moses at the bush showed the resurrection of the dead, 'when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.'

To preserve these hopes in the world, on which the restoration of the world to life and immortality depended, was Abraham called from his own country and kindred, then tainted with idolatry, to be a witness to God and his truth. Had he,

with all the rest of mankind, been suffered to continue in idolatry, the knowlege of God had been lost, and the remembrance of his Providence in creating man at first, of the hopes given of a second and better creation after the fall, had utterly perished. Abraham was not called merely for his own sake; much less were his posterity, a stubborn and stiff-necked people, preserved for their own sakes; but he was called, and they preserved, to be instruments in the hands of God for fulfilling the purposes of his mercy, in the restoration and redemption of the world. The great article of the covenant, limited to Abraham and his chosen seed, most evidently regarded the whole race of man, and was to grow, in the fulness of time, into a blessing on all the nations of the earth: he and his posterity were depositories of these hopes, or, to use the words of St. Paul, this was the Jews' chief advantage above others, 'that unto them were committed the oracles of God.'

This account will help us to a distinct view of the prophecies relating to this period of time of which we are speaking. As two covenants were given to Abraham and his seed, one a temporal covenant, to take place and to be performed in the land of Canaan; the other a covenant of better hopes, and to be performed in a better country; so are the prophecies given to Abraham and to his children after him, of two kinds; one relative to the temporal covenant, and given in discharge and execution of God's temporal promises; the other relative to the spiritual covenant, given to confirm and establish the hopes of futurity, and to prepare and make ready the people for the reception of the kingdom of God.

Many of the ancient prophecies relate to both covenants; and hence it comes to pass that at the first appearance many of the ancient predictions seem to be hardly consistent with themselves, but to be made up of ideas which can never unite in one person or in one event. Thus the promises to David of a son to succeed in his throne, have some circumstances which are applicable only to Solomon, and the temporal dominion over the house of Israel; some which are peculiar to that Son of David, who was heir of an everlasting kingdom, which was to be established on truth and righteousness. Hence it is that we often find the promises of temporal felicity and temporal deli-

verance raised so high, that no temporal felicity or temporal deliverance can answer the description; the thoughts and expressions of the prophet naturally moving from the blessings of one covenant to the blessings of the other, and sometimes describing the inconceivable glories of one covenant by expressions and similitudes borrowed from the more sensible glories and blessings of the other. The prophet Isaiah, being sent to raise the drooping spirits of Ahaz and the house of David, threatened at that time with immediate ruin by two potent enemies, could not but remember the double promise of a kingdom given to David, which was a double security for the establishment of his house; together therefore with the assurances and the signs given of temporal deliverance, he intermixes the assurance and the sign of the greater deliverance, before the completion of which the house of David could not fail; for that house should continue till 'the virgin conceived and brought forth Immanuel,' that Son of David, to whom the everlasting kingdom was promised. Ought it to be matter of wonder that the prophets, who were ministers of both covenants, intrusted with the counsel of God for the direction of the temporal affairs of the people of Israel, and commissioned to cherish the hopes and expectations of a better kingdom, to be given in virtue of God's everlasting covenant; ought it to be wondered at, I say, that they often speak of both kingdoms together; that they make use of the temporal deliverances as an argument to encourage the hopes of the spiritual? when in truth the temporal deliverances, being the actual performance of one covenant, were a great security for the performance of the other; and it was unnatural to see the hand of God performing one promise, and not to reflect on the certainty of his performing the other.

The blessings belonging to the special covenant given to Abraham and his seed, were reserved to be revealed in God's appointed time. The prophets under the law could not be commissioned to declare these blessings openly and nakedly, without anticipating the time of their revelation. Hence it is that the predictions concerning Christ and his kingdom are clothed in such figures as were proper to raise the hope and attention of the people, without carrying them beyond the bounds of knowlege prescribed by God to the age of the Jewish covenant.

If we consider each kind of prophecy distinctly by itself, we shall the better discern how this case stands. To begin then with those relating to the temporal covenant: Abraham was called from his father's house on a promise that he should become a great nation, and that his 'seed should possess the land of Canaan.' This promise could not be fulfilled in all its parts, till Abraham's family was multiplied into a nation. This required many years; and what must become of these children of promise in the mean time? They had no country of their own; where then should they settle and multiply? I will not launch out into speculation on the methods of Providence by which the people of Israel were raised and preserved; but let any one read the prophecies from the call of Abraham to Moses, he will evidently see that they refer to this state of things. To arm the faith of Abraham and his posterity against the fears of disappointments, under the necessary delays, and some evil treatments they were to undergo, God acquaints Abraham with his purpose, and tells him his seed should be 'four hundred years in a strange land.' This circumstance, had it not been foretold, would in all probability have blotted out the memory of the promise; four hundred years of distress are sufficient to cure any people of their great expectations. But this prophecy was a warning and a security in this respect. When the time of servitude drew near, and the people wanted more than ordinary help to preserve their trust in the promise of God, Jacob, before his end, was enlightened by the spirit of prophecy to set before the twelve tribes the glory, and honors, and possessions, that should accrue to each in the happy day of their triumph: by the same spirit, Joseph, on his death-bed, assures them that 'God would surely visit them, and bring them into the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.' These were cordials prepared against the day of distress, then near at hand.

The times of Moses and of Joshua, those days of miracles as well as prophecies, want no explication: the intention of Providence appears plain in every step, and may be discerned by every eye.

The commonwealth of Israel was raised and florished under the temporal covenant given at first to Noah; and in a parti-

cular manner, with additional promises, confirmed to Abraham and his seed: for this reason all the promises and threatenings of the law are temporal, suitable to the age and season of the world. But these temporal blessings and punishments were so visibly administered by the hand of God, that every instance of the execution of the threats and promises of the law became a new proof of its divine authority. If you inquire why God did so visibly interpose in the government of this people, always guiding and directing them in the conduct of temporal affairs and matters of state by the voice of his prophets, when all other nations before and since have been left under the general rules of Providence to their own conduct and discretion; the answer, I think, is this: no other nation ever had a divine law given on the establishment of temporal blessings and punishments; and therefore God had not so bound himself to any other nation, to account to them for their temporal prosperity and adversity: but to the Jews, with whom he had established a law and a covenant on temporal promises, he stood obliged to make good his word, and to justify himself to them in the administration of temporal affairs. For this reason a succession of prophets was raised up among them, at whose mouths they might receive the direction of God: and this is what Moses means, when he says, 'what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call on him for?' Deut. iv. 7.

Whenever it was necessary to punish the people for their disobedience, that they might not be tempted by the prosperity of other nations and their own adversity to fall away to other gods, they were forewarned of the things that were to befal them; their calamities were prophetically described to them, that they might know, whenever they suffered, that it was the very hand of God, of their own God, that was on them: and this is the reason of our finding so many prophecies under the law relating to the civil state and condition of the Jews; for this cause the great captivity of Babylon is so largely and fully foretold by the prophets, that the people might not be tempted to think that the gods of the nations had prevailed against them, and thereby be seduced, as oftentimes they were seduced by this very imagination, to forsake God in their distress; but

that they might know that the Almighty hand of the Lord was in all their sufferings, and might thereby become humble and obedient: and farther, that they might know that all their adversity and prosperity came on them according to the express terms of their covenant with God, who blessed them when obedient, and humbled them when obstinate. All nations have had and still have their turns of prosperity and adversity, and God thinks not himself obliged to account to them for the measures of his Providence towards them: but the case was otherwise with the Jewish nation; for God having established a covenant with them on temporal promises and temporal curses, the very execution of the covenant, on God's part, required him to appear and openly administer the penalties and promises of his law; to procure the happiness of the people when obedient, and to inflict the punishment due to their iniquity. Hence it is that he directs them in the way of temporal happiness by the voice of the prophets, and gives them open warning of all evils which he brings on them; that they may see him in every instance performing the word of his covenant. Every prophecy from God spoke in the language of Moses's song, 'See now, that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me: I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.'

This accounts for all the prophecies of the Old Testament relating to the temporal state of the Jewish nation; with which we have no farther concern than only to give a reasonable account of them; that the ancient prophets of God may not pass for mere fortune-tellers, as they have been represented to the world of late.

The people of the Jews were so prone to follow the customs of the nations around them, and to fall away to idolatry, that from their coming into Canaan till the times of the Babylonish captivity, there was a perpetual struggle between the prophets of God and the false prophets of the nations, which should prevail; with this view are many ancient prophecies given to preserve the people from being seduced by the nations round them. We may learn this from the reproof given to the messengers of Ahaziah, who had sent to inquire of Baalzebub, the god of Ekron, whether he should recover of his disease: 'Go,'

says the angel of the Lord to Elijah, 'Go meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them; Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baalzebub the God of Ekron? Now therefore thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die:' 2 Kings i. 3. 4. To the very same purpose God speaks in the prophet Isaiah, rendering an account of his ancient prophecies—'I have declared the former things from the beginning, and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass. I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass, I showed it thee; lest thou shouldst say, Mine idol hath done them; and my graven image and my molten image hath commanded them:' Isaiah xlviii. 3. 4. 5.

You see now on what foot all the prophecies in the Old Testament stand, which relate to the temporal concerns of the Jewish nation; you see likewise the reason why this kind of prophecy has ceased in the Christian church. The gospel is not founded in temporal promises; so far from it, that we are called on to take up our cross and follow Christ. The bringing in of better hopes has vacated the promises of the Mosaic covenant; and it is expected of us, after so much light given, that our faith should be proof against the adversaries of the world, without the help of a prophet to foretel or to reveal to us in every instance the counsel of God.

Those prophecies relating to the things of this life concern us but little; they have had their completion long since in events which affect not us: but others there are relating to the great *depositum* intrusted with the Jews, even the hopes of redemption, which were to be a blessing to all the nations of the earth, in which we are highly concerned, and which will deserve our particular consideration.

SUMMARY OF DISCOURSE VI.

THE prophecies of the Old Testament relating to the temporal covenant with Abraham and his descendants having been considered with regard to the purport and design of Providence, it remains that those which relate to that great and universal blessing promised to him and his seed, and through them to all nations of the world, be considered in the same method; inquiry being made, not into the express meaning and accomplishment of every single prophecy, but into the general use and design of them.

The prophecies of the several periods already considered have been found to correspond with the state of religion in the world at the time of giving the prophecy; a great presumption that the case was the same under the Jewish dispensation. We must therefore consider the state of religion under the Mosaic law, and examine how far and to what purposes prophecy was requisite.

With respect to this state, every man may know it by reference to the books of the law. But there are two questions to be considered previously. First: the promise to Abraham consisting, as we have seen, of two distinct parts or covenants, temporal and spiritual, to which of these two is the law of Moses annexed? If the law was given in execution of the promise made to all nations, then have the nations nothing farther to expect; God has fulfilled his word, and we are wrong in rejecting the Jewish law. But if this law be built on the temporal covenant only, and given properly to the Jews alone, then both Jews and Gentiles have farther hopes, and just ex-

pectations of seeing God's promise to all nations accomplished. It is fully shown and explained that the law of Moses was given to the Jews only, and not to all nations.

This being the case, it is evident that the promise of a blessing to all nations subsisted in its full force and vigor during the continuance of the law of Moses; for as the promise was not completed by the giving of the law, in which all nations were not concerned, so neither could so general a promise be annulled by a private law, given to one people only: and this is the meaning of St. Paul, Gal. iii. 17.

Secondly, another question to be considered is this: how far the religion of the Jews was preparatory to that new dispensation, which was in due time to be revealed in accomplishment of the promise made to all nations? If Abraham and his posterity were not chosen merely for their own sakes, and if the temporal covenant was given for the sake of the everlasting one, and to be subservient to its introduction, it is probable that all parts of the Jewish dispensation were adapted to serve the same end. If this appears to be a reasonable supposition, then have we a foundation to inquire into the meaning of the law, not merely as it is a literal command to the Jews, but as it contains the figure and image of good things to come.

To proceed then. The Jewish dispensation not conveying to all nations the blessing promised, but being only the administration of the hopes and expectations created by the promise of God, in this respect it stood intirely on the word of prophecy; and inasmuch as it did virtually contain the hopes of the gospel, the religion itself was in fact a prophecy, and the prophetical office in some measure necessary and essential to this church.

In what manner the blessing of all men was established with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we have already seen. The next limitation of it is to the tribe of Judah, in that famous pro-

phecy, Gen. xlix. 10. Of this there are many interpretations and difficulties; but take the whole prophecy relating to the tribe of Judah together, and there will be enough to answer our purpose: this fully shown. The next and last limitation of this special promise is to the family of David; a point so uncontested that it cannot be called in question without rejecting the authority of all the prophets: this point enlarged on.

It is much to be observed that the prophecies relating to the covenant of better hopes were given to the people of God when religion itself seemed to be in distress, and to want all helps to support it. This shown in the case of Abraham, in the case of Isaac and Jacob, and of the people of Israel in Egypt: as soon as God appeared manifestly, making good his temporal promises, &c. and the people wanted no other evidence to keep them in obedience, we meet with few instances of this sort of prophecy. While God was their king, directing all their affairs by the voice of his prophets, their adversity and prosperity, which were always proportionate to their obedience and disobedience, were a sufficient instruction to them: this the case from Moses to David. But when succeeding kings fell into idolatry, and the people followed their example, and God determined to scatter them, then for the sake of the few righteous were the better hopes revived. Isaiah, who speaks so plainly of Christ's kingdom, entered on his office not long before the ten tribes were carried into captivity, in punishment for their idolatry. The prophet Jeremy saw the other tribes carried away to Babylon; and Daniel was himself one of the captives. This was the time when faith wanted the comfort of future hopes, and therefore God thought fit to give plainer intimations of his purpose than ever had been given before. Now it was that *the seed in whom all nations were to be blessed* was manifestly described, and all things relating to him foretold. This great scene being thus clearly opened, the work of prophecy was finished, and the gift itself soon ceased:

a plain evidence that the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.

The ten tribes, which were carried away by the king of Assyria, never returned to their own country: the tribe of Judah, after seventy years captivity, came back to Canaan, erected a new temple, and continued a tribe and a people till the last destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. Can this have been by chance? And if the hand of God be visible in it, why this partial regard to the tribe of Judah? There was nothing in them to justify it: they were as bad as their neighbors; but they had one advantage; they had a promise which none of the ten tribes had, *that the sceptre should not depart from Judah till Shiloh came.* Observations on the forfeited privileges and destitute condition of this people in the land of their forefathers, to account more clearly for the ceasing of prophecy some ages before the coming of Christ.

That the prophecies relating to the second and better covenant produced a suitable effect on the righteous among the Israelites, may be collected from some few allusions in the books of the prophets: see Amos v. 18. Isa. v. 18. 19. lxvi. 5. and Ecclus x. 4.

That the prophecy given at the time of the fall was understood in the ancient Jewish church to relate to the times of the Messias, may with great probability be inferred from many passages, but especially from one in Isaiah, lxv. 25.; where after a full description of Christ's kingdom, and the happiness of the *seed of the blessed of the Lord,* the state of the wicked in the time of that kingdom is thus described in few words, *and dust shall be the serpent's meat.* This allusion commented on.

These prophecies relating to the kingdom of the Messias have still a larger and more extensive use. They were given to the Jews of old for the support of their faith, and are a standing reproof to those of this age for their unbelief; they are a support and evidence to the gospel, and furnish every true

believer with an answer, *to him who asketh the reason of the hope that is in him.*

They who are educated in the belief of Christianity, and taught to receive the books of both Testaments with equal reverence, are not apt to distinguish between the evidence for their faith, arising from the one and from the other. This distinction pointed out, and exemplified by the different method of St. Paul's preaching to the Jews at Antioch, Acts xiii. and to the Athenians, Acts xvii. In the former case he argues professedly with Jews, to whom were committed the oracles of God, and who by them were well instructed in the great marks and characters of the expected Messiah. It had been highly absurd then to reason with them on other arguments, till he had first convinced them by their prophets; and having so convinced them, it would have been impertinent. To them therefore he urges and applies the authority of prophecy only. But to the Athenians, who knew not, or if they knew, reverenced not the prophets, it had been ridiculous to offer proofs from prophecies: the appeal therefore before them is made to the sound and clear principles of natural religion, and to the miracles of the gospel, the truth of which, as they were matters of fact, was capable of undeniable evidence and demonstration.

It is observable that St. Paul calls the Athenians only to repentance, and to faith in Christ as appointed by God to judge the world, having natural religion with him for all his doctrine, except this latter point; and for that he appeals to the evidence of the resurrection. But to the Jews he speaks of a Saviour, of remission of sins, of justification beyond the law of Moses. Whence this difference, unless that the Jews were from their scriptures acquainted with the lost condition of man, and knew that a redemption was to be expected? But the Gentiles had lost this knowlege, and were first to be taught the condition of the world, &c., before they could have any

just notion of its redemption. From the state of the case farther displayed, it is shown that to the Jew prophecy was the first proof, to the Gentile it was the last. The Jew believed in Christ because foretold by the prophets; the Gentile because they had so exactly foretold Jesus Christ. Both became firm believers; having, each in his way, a full view of all the dispensations of Providence towards mankind.

This account will enable us to clear the argument from prophecy of many misrepresentations; but we must proceed to observe another use of prophecy with regard to the Jews, for which the Gentiles seem not to have had the like occasion.

The Jews lived under a divine law, established in signs and wonders, founded in great promises and terrible threats, as far as the blessings and terrors of this world go. They are warned over and over not to forsake their law, or to suffer any strange customs to grow up among them. These cautions, intended to preserve them from the corruptions of surrounding nations, might easily, as eventually they have done, grow into prejudices against any future revelation, though made on the authority of God himself. Hence it was but reasonable to give them early and frequent notice of the change intended, &c. There are many prophecies of this sort in the Old Testament; many declarations on God's part that he had no pleasure in sacrifices, &c.; strange declarations, considering that they were of his own appointment! but not so, considering the many prophecies of a new and better covenant. Instance given from Isaiah i. 11. 14. But the most remarkable one is the prophecy of Moses himself, Deut. xviii. 15. *The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him ye shall hearken.* And the same is repeated at ver. 18. with this addition; *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.* Here now is a plain declaration on God's part, at the very time the

law was established, of another prophet, like unto Moses, to be raised in time, as a new lawgiver, to whom all were to yield obedience. The interpretation of those who refer this to a succession of prophets, refuted, from the letter of the text, and from the great difference that existed between the other prophets and Moses, who is distinguished from them by the Jews themselves in four particulars: 1. Moses had no dreams nor visions: 2. he had light from God immediately without the interposition of angels: 3. his mind was never disturbed or dismayed by the prophetic influence; *for God spake to him as a man speaks to his friend:* 4. he could prophecy at all times whenever he would; whereas others prophesied only at such times when the word came to them. But another chief dignity belonging to Moses, and not unto them, is, that he was a lawgiver; and the prophet foretold was evidently to resemble Moses in this particular: this point enlarged on.

Now if we inquire, from historical evidence, after the completion of this prophecy, we shall find that it did most punctually agree with the character of our blessed Saviour, and not with any other prophet either before or after him: this fully shown. But, moreover, the execution of the threat annexed to this prophecy has been literally fulfilled on the whole Jewish nation: who can deny that this part of the prophecy at least has been punctually verified?

This prophecy and many others seem intended for the Jews principally to prepare them betimes for the reception of a new lawgiver, and to intimate that the Mosaic covenant was not to be perpetual.

The above exposition of the several periods of prophecy under the Old Testament may show the main design and use of it, opening a way to a fair and impartial consideration of the particular prophecies relating to each period.

DISCOURSE VI.

THE prophecies of the Old Testament, generally considered, relate either to the temporal state and condition of the Jews, and were, in order to the administration and execution on God's part of the temporal covenant, given to Abraham and his natural descendants; or they relate to that great and universal blessing promised to Abraham and to his seed, though not limited to them, but expressly designed and extended, in the words of the original covenant, 'to all the nations of the world.' Of these we have already considered the first kind, and endeavored to show the purport and design of Providence in the many oracles reducible to this head. It remains now that we consider the prophecies of the second kind in the same method; not inquiring into the express meaning and accomplishment of every single prophecy applicable to this subject, but into the general use and design of these prophecies; which being discovered, we shall be able, with better success, to apply ourselves to the examination of each divine oracle. The prophecies of the several periods already considered, have been found to correspond to the state of religion in the world at the time of giving the prophecy; a great presumption that the case is the same under the Jewish dispensation. We must therefore, in order to our present inquiry, consider the state of religion under the Mosaic dispensation, and examine how far and to what purposes prophecy was requisite, and whether in fact these purposes were served by the prophecies under the law.

As to the state of religion under the law of Moses, to save your time and my own, I shall refer myself to the books of the law in every man's hand. But two questions there are necessary to be considered at present; and first, the promise to Abraham consisting of two distinct parts, or including two distinct covenants, the one relating to the temporal state and

prosperity of his seed in the land of Canaan, the other to the blessing which through him and his seed was to be conveyed to all nations of the earth; the question is, to which of these two covenants the law of Moses is annexed. If the law was given in execution of the promise made to all nations, then have the nations nothing farther to expect; God has fulfilled his word: the Jews are right in adhering to their law, and we in the wrong in rejecting it; but if the law of Moses is built on the temporal covenant only, and given properly to the Jews only, then both Jews and Gentiles have farther hopes, and a just expectation remaining, to see God's promise to all nations accomplished, which was not accomplished by the giving of the law.

I have already, in the course of this argument, observed to you that the law of Moses was given to the Jews only, and not to all nations; for which these reasons, among others, may be assigned:

First, the obligation of no law extends beyond the terms of its promulgation. Now the law of Moses was promulged to the Jews only; the words are, 'Hear, O Israel;' whereas, had the law been intended for all nations, it ought to have been promulged to all, and the words should have been, 'Hear, all nations of the earth.' And thus the Christian law is promulged; the Apostles had it expressly in commission from Christ, 'to teach *all nations*, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you *alway*, even unto the *end of the world:*' a commission which plainly shows that the gospel dispensation extends to all places and all times, even to the end of the world; and that no other new law is to be expected.

Secondly, the law of Moses relates to the temporal covenant only, as being established expressly on the terms and conditions of it. The ten commandments are founded on this, that God brought them, the Jews, 'out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage:' a reason which extended to the people of the Jews only; for all other nations were not brought out of the land of Egypt and the house of bondage. The first threatening is temporal, of visiting the iniquity of the fathers

on the children unto the third and fourth generation; the promise is of the same kind; both relative to the temporal covenant: as is likewise the promise of the fifth commandment, 'that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.'

Thirdly, many rights and performances of the law were confined to the land of Canaan and the temple of Jerusalem; for which reason even the Jews, in their dispersion, pretend not to observe the law in these points, and they would be transgressors of the law if they did. Now it is absurd, if the law was intended for all people, that the main performances of it should be confined within the territories of one particular people only; and therefore when the Christian law was to take place, every country was to be a proper place of divine worship; which is the true meaning of our Saviour's words to the woman of Samaria: 'Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father:' John iv. 21.

Now this being the case, it is evident that the promise of a blessing to all nations subsisted in its full force and vigor during the continuance of the law of Moses; for as the promise was not completed by the giving of the law, in which all nations were not concerned: so neither could so general a promise be annulled or set aside by a private law, given to one people only. And this is the true sense and meaning of St. Paul's argument, Gal. iii. 17. 'This I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.'

Secondly, another question proper to be considered with respect to the state of religion under the Jewish dispensation, is this: how far the religion of the Jews was preparatory to that new dispensation which was in due time to be revealed, in accomplishment of the promise made to all nations. Now if Abraham and his posterity were chosen, not merely for their own sakes, or out of any partial views and regards towards them, but to be instruments in the hand of God for bringing about his great designs in the world; if the temporal covenant was given for the sake of the everlasting covenant, and to be sub-

servient to the introduction of it; it is highly probable that all parts of the Jewish dispensation were adapted to serve the same end, and that the law founded on the temporal covenant itself was to prepare the way to better promises. If this, on the whole, appears to be a reasonable supposition, then have we a foundation to inquire into the meaning of the law, not merely as it is a literal command to the Jews, but as containing the figure and image of good things to come. It can hardly be supposed that God, intending finally to save the world by Christ and the preaching of the gospel, should give an intermediate law, which had no respect nor relation to the covenant which he intended to establish for ever. And whoever will be at the pains to consider seriously the whole administration of Providence together from the beginning to the end, may see perhaps more reason than he imagines, to allow of types and figures in the Jewish law.

To proceed then. The Jewish dispensation not conveying to all nations the blessings promised through Abraham's seed, but being only the administration of the hopes and expectations created by the promise of God, in this respect it stood intirely on the word of prophecy; for future hopes and expectations from God can have no other real foundation. Inasmuch then as the Jewish religion did virtually contain the hopes of the gospel, the religion itself was a prophecy; and as the Jewish church was founded to preserve and to administer these hopes, the prophetical office was in some measure necessary and essential to this church, to nourish and support their hopes and expectations from God.

In what manner the 'blessing of all men' was established with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, we have already seen. The next limitation of it is to the tribe of Judah, in that famous prophecy delivered by Jacob just before his death: 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be:' Gen. xlix. 10. There are so many interpretations of this prophecy, some peculiar to the Jews and some to Christians, and so many difficulties to be accounted for whatever way we take, that I shall not pretend to enter into the decision of them at present. But take the whole prophecy re-

lating to the tribe of Judah together, and there will be enough to answer our immediate purpose, without entering into these obscurities. 'Judah,' says Jacob, 'thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee.' In a form of words not unlike this, the peculiar blessing was appropriated to Shem: 'Japhet shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant:' Gen. ix. 27. And when Jacob himself had the blessing of Abraham settled on him by his father Isaac in preference to his brother Esau, the very words in which the grant was made to him are these: 'Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee; be thou lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee:' Gen. xxvii. 29. Now when Jacob uses partly these very words, partly others of like import, can he be understood to bestow any other blessing on his son Judah than that very blessing which he, in this same form of words, received from his father? Could he forget the import of his own blessing when he was preferred to Esau? or could he use this solemn form of words, and mean something quite different from the sense they carried when his ancient father pronounced them over him? The other parts of this prophecy relate, I think, to the temporal prosperity of Judah, and promise a continuance of that tribe till the 'blessing of Abraham' should come and be extended to all nations: but I will not enter into this large field of controversy.

The next and the last limitation of this special promise is to the family of David; a point so uncontested, that there is no room to call it in question without rejecting the authority of all the prophets; and so plain withal, that it needs no proving. Here the promise rested until it fell on Him for whom it was reserved, and to whom it was ever due; on Him to whom the birthright appertained, who was the first-born of every creature; and concerning whom the Almighty had declared long before, 'I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.' Here it is fixed, and here it must rest, till 'all things are accomplished; for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet; till death itself is swallowed up victory.'

It is much to be observed that the prophecies relating to the covenant of better hopes were given to the people of God when religion itself seemed to be in distress, and to want all helps to support it in the world. When Abraham was called to forsake the country and the religion of his fathers, then had he the promise of the blessed seed. Isaac and Jacob being surrounded on all sides with idolatry, in the midst of a very corrupt and degenerate world, were sustained by the same hopes. When the people of Israel were in Egypt, and under many temptations of following the gods of the country, then was the promise settled on Judah, and the remarkable prophecy given of Shiloh's coming. As soon as God appeared manifestly, and oftentimes miraculously, making good the promises of the temporal covenant to the children of Abraham, and the people wanted no other evidence to keep them steadfast in their obedience, or to secure them from falling away to the gods of the nations round them, we meet with few instances of this sort of prophecy. Whilst God himself was governor and king of the people, and directed all their affairs by the voice of his prophets, their adversity and their prosperity, which were always in proportion to their obedience and disobedience, were a sufficient instruction to them to cleave to God steadfastly. This was the case from Moses to David, who had the promise of the everlasting covenant established with him and with his seed, in reward of his constancy and faith towards God under all the difficulties through which he made his way to the crown appointed to him by God. But when the succeeding kings fell into idolatry, and the people, prone to evil, followed their example, so that God determined to remove them out of his sight and scatter them among the idolatrous nations whose gods they had chosen before the Lord their Saviour; then for the sake of the few righteous were the better hopes revived, that 'the just might live by faith, and that a remnant might be saved.' The prophet Isaiah, who speaks so plainly of the kingdom of Christ, entered on his office not long before the ten tribes were carried into captivity as a punishment for their idolatry. The prophet Jeremy saw the other tribes carried away to Babylon; and Daniel was himself one of the children of the captivity. This was the time in which true faith wanted

the comfort of future hopes: the present scene was dark and gloomy; the loving kindness of the Lord was hid from his people, and they saw nothing but tokens of anger and displeasure on every side. In this time therefore God thought fit to give more and plainer intimations of his purpose to establish the kingdom of righteousness, than ever had been given before from the days of Adam. Now was it that the 'seed in whom all nations were to be blessed' was manifestly described; that the time and place of his birth were appointed; his great works, his glories, and his sufferings, were foretold. Now was it that God taught his people plainly to expect a new covenant, a better than that made with their fathers. In a word, now was it that all eyes were opened to look for his coming, who was to be 'the glory of Israel; the desire of all nations; a light to lighten the Gentiles.' This great scene being opened and placed in so clear a view, the work of prophecy was finished, and in a few years the gift itself ceased: a plain evidence that the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus; and that all the blessings and promises given to God's ancient people were to have their final accomplishment in the manifestation of the blessed seed.

The ten tribes, which were carried away by the king of Assyria, never more returned to their own country; the tribe of Judah, after seventy years captivity, came back to the land of Canaan, erected a new temple, and continued to be a tribe and a people till the last destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. If you think all this happened by chance, there is no room to ask you any questions about it; but if you allow the hand of God to be in these events, tell me from whence this distinction, this partial regard to the tribe of Judah? Read their own prophets, and learn from thence the character of their tribe; you will find no merit in them to justify this regard of God towards them: they were as bad as their neighbors; but they had one advantage, they had a promise which none of the ten tribes had, 'that the sceptre should not depart from Judah till Shiloh came.' For the fulfilling of this promise, and all the promises relating to the blessed seed, was this tribe preserved some hundreds of years after the others had ceased to be a people.

That this tribe was resettled purely for the accomplishment of God's promises of a better covenant, appears from all the circumstances of their condition after their return. They were not restored to enjoy the ancient privileges of the people of God in the land of Canaan: those privileges were forfeited by their iniquity; their Urim and their Thummim were no more heard of; and after they were once established in the land, (a point in which Providence was nearly concerned,) the gift of prophecy ceased, and God appeared not in the management of their temporal affairs, as formerly he had done. They were often distressed, and often brought near ruin; they suffered in all the changes of the empire of the east, and were, as they express themselves, 'servants in the land which God gave to their fathers:' Neh. ix. 36. I mention this particular, to account to you the more clearly for the ceasing of prophecy some ages before the coming of Christ. Prophecy among the Jews was relative to the two covenants given to Abraham; when the Jews had forfeited the blessings of the temporal covenant, and God had fully opened and prepared the way for the coming in of the second, he recalled his ministers and ambassadors, for whose service he had no longer any occasion.

That the prophecies relating to the second and better covenant produced a suitable effect, and were matter of comfort and consolation to the righteous among the Israelites, may be collected from some few allusions to the opinions of their own times, to be found in the books of the prophets. That the people of Israel had, in the days of the prophet Amos, a notion of some great deliverance or blessing still to come, may be gathered from the reproof given to those who, though void of the fear of God, yet expected a share in his blessing. 'Wo unto you that desire the days of the Lord: to what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light:' Amos v. 18. As some waited in faith for the consolation of Israel, so others there were who mocked at all such hopes and expectations: to these the prophet Isaiah speaks; 'Wo unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-rope: that say, let him make speed and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it:' Isa. v. 18. 19

Under the power of these irreligious mockers the righteous (and such has ever been their lot) were wearied and oppressed, but the prophet speaks comfort to them: 'hear the words of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, and cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed:' lxvi. 5. As wicked as the people of Israel were, yet in all times were there some who waited for the salvation of God; whose faith and hope are well expressed by the son of Sirach: 'the power of the earth is in the hand of the Lord, and in due time he will set over it one that is profitable:' Ecclus x. 4.

That the prophecy given at the time of the fall was understood in the ancient Jewish church to relate to the times of the Messias, may with great probability be inferred from many passages, but especially from one in Isaiah, where after a full description of the kingdom of Christ, and the happiness of those who were the seed of the blessed of the Lord, the state and condition of the wicked in the time of that kingdom is thus described in few words; 'and dust shall be the serpent's meat:' Isa. lxv. 25. By what figure of speech, or for what reason is the serpent here made to signify those who are distinguished from the seed of the blessed? And how comes the punishment of these reprobates to be set forth by the serpent's eating dust? Here is nothing in the prophet to explain this figure; but he seems to use it as a saying well known, and perfectly understood by his countrymen; and from whence could they borrow it but from the history of man's fall? There you may find the 'seed of the blessed,' to whom victory over the serpent is promised; and there you may see the serpent doomed to eat dust; and the allusions to this ancient prophecy, in Isaiah's description of the kingdom of the Messias, shows in what sense it was understood of old, and for many ages before the birth of Christ.

These prophecies relating to the kingdom of the Messias have still a larger and more extensive use, not confined to any particular age, but reaching to every age of the Christian church. They were given to the Jews of old for the support of their faith, and are a standing reproof to their children of this age

for their unbelief: they taught those of old time to expect the kingdom of Christ, and are a condemnation to those of this time for rejecting it: they are a support and an evidence to the gospel, and furnish every true believer with an answer to give to him who asketh the reason of the hope that is in him.

They who are educated in the belief of Christianity, and taught to receive the books of both Testaments with equal reverence, are not apt to distinguish between the evidence for their faith, arising from the one and the other. But if we look back to the earliest times of preaching the gospel, and consider how the case stood as to the Jewish converts on one side, who were convinced of the divine authority of the Old Testament, and as to the Gentile converts on the other, who had no such persuasion, the distinction will appear very manifestly. The ancient prophecies, though they are evidence both to the Jew and to the Gentile, yet are they not so to both in the same way of reasoning and deduction, nor to the same end and purpose. For consider; the Jew was possessed of the oracles of God, and firmly persuaded of the truth of them; the very first thing therefore which he had to do on the appearance of the Messiah was to examine his title by the character given of him in the prophets; he could not, consistently with his belief in God and faith in the ancient prophecies, attend to other arguments, till fully satisfied and convinced in this. All the prophecies of the Old Testament relating to the office and character of the Messiah were immoveable bars to all pretensions, till fulfilled and accomplished in the person pretending to be the promised and long-expected Redeemer. For this reason the preachers of the gospel, in applying to the Jews, begin with the argument from prophecy. Thus St. Paul, in his discourse with the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia, begins with the call of Abraham, and after a short historical deduction of matters from thence to the times of David, he adds, 'of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour Jesus:' Acts xiii. 23. where you see plainly that the whole argument rests on the authority of prophecy; and all the parts of this apostolical sermon are answerable to this beginning, proceeding from one end to the other on the authority of the old prophets. But the very same Apostle St. Paul, preaching to

the people of Athens, Acts xvii. argues from other topics; he says nothing of the prophets, to whose mission and authority the Athenians were perfect strangers, but begins with declaring to them, 'God that made the world and all things therein:' he goes on condemning all idolatrous practices, and assuring them that 'God is not worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing.' He accounts to them for the past times of ignorance at which God winked, and tells them that now he calls all men to repentance, having appointed Christ Jesus to be the judge of all men; for the truth of which he appeals to the evidence of Christ's resurrection, 'whereof,' says the Apostle, 'he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead:' ver. 31. Whence comes this difference? How comes St. Paul's argument, on one and the same subject, in Acts xiii. and xvii. to be so unlike to each other? Can this be accounted for any other way than by considering the different circumstances of the persons to whom he delivered himself. In Acts xiii. he argues professedly with Jews, to whom were committed the oracles of God, and who, from these oracles, were well instructed in the great marks and characters of the expected Messiah. It had been highly absurd therefore to reason with them on other arguments, till he had first convinced them by their prophets; and having so convinced them, it would have been impertinent. To them therefore he urges and applies the authority of prophecy only; but to the Athenians, who knew not the prophets, or if they knew them, yet had no reverence or esteem for them, it had been quite ridiculous to offer proofs from prophecies: the appeal therefore before them is made to the sound and clear principles of natural religion, and to the miracles of the gospel, the fame of which probably had, long before, reached to Athens; and the truth of which, they being mere matters of fact, was capable of undeniable evidence and demonstration.

It is very observable that St. Paul, in his sermon at Athens, goes no farther than calling them to repentance and to faith in Christ, as the person appointed by God to judge the world; in which doctrine he had natural religion with him in every point except the appointment of Christ to be judge, for which he appeals to the evidence given by God in raising Jesus from

the dead. But to the Jews he speaks of a Saviour, of remission of sins, of justification of all believers from all things from which the law of Moses could not justify. Whence comes this difference, unless from hence, that the Jews were from their Scriptures well acquainted with the lost condition of man, and knew that a redemption from sin and the powers of it was to be expected? But the Gentiles had lost this knowlege, and were first to be taught the condition of the world and the various administrations of Providence with regard to mankind, before they could have any just notion of the redemption of the world.

With respect to the Gentiles then, the case stood thus: they were called from idols to the acknowlegement of the true God, from iniquity to the practice of virtue, by setting before them Christ Jesus, the preacher of righteousness, and the appointed judge of the world, under the confirmation of many signs and wonders wrought by God for this purpose. Being so far established, they were led back to view this wonderful scene of Providence as it stood in the ancient prophecies; and with them the authority of the prophecies stood mainly on the exact completion, which was before their eyes. From the authority of prophecy so established, they understood the past workings of Providence and the state of the world, and came to see that Christ was not only the judge, but the Redeemer of mankind. To the Jew prophecy was the first proof; to the Gentile it was the last: the Jew believed in Christ because foretold by the prophets; the Gentile believed the prophets because they had so exactly foretold Jesus Christ. Both became firm believers; having, each in his way, a full view of all the dispensations of Providence towards mankind.

If this account be true, as it appears to me to be, it will enable us to clear this argument from prophecy of the many misrepresentations under which it has been industriously clouded: it will show us that there is no occasion for a Gentile to become a Jew in order to his becoming a Christian, on the authority of the ancient prophets: it will show us that the proof from prophecy is not *argumentum ad hominem* in the Jew's case, nor in the Gentile's; nor yet an argument of the same kind in both cases, though in both cases proceeding on real

and solid principles of reason. But I must leave these applications to you, and proceed to observe another use of prophecy with regard to the Jews, and for which the Gentile world seems not to have had the same occasion.

The Jews lived under a divine law, established in signs and wonders, and mighty works, founded in very great promises on one side, in threatenings of mighty terror on the other, as far as the blessings and terrors of this world can extend. They are warned over and over not to forsake their law, or to suffer any strange customs and ceremonies to grow up among them. These cautions, intended to preserve them from the corruptions of the heathen nations around them, might easily, as in the event they have done, grow into prejudices against any future revelation, though made on the authority of God himself. To guard against such prejudices, and to render them without excuse, it was but reasonable to give them early and frequent notice of the change intended, that they might not, under the color of adhering steadfastly and faithfully to God's first covenant, reject his second, when the time of publication came. There are of this sort many prophecies in the Old Testament; of this kind are the many declarations on God's part, that he had no pleasure in sacrifices and oblations, in new moons and in sabbaths; strange declarations, considering that all these were his own appointments! but not strange, considering the many and frequent prophecies of a new and a better covenant to be established with his people. The prophet Isaiah is frequently styled the evangelical prophet, because of the many and express prophecies to be found in him relating to Christ and his church. Now this prophet, in the very entrance on his work, shows the little value of mere legal institutions: 'To what purpose,' says he, speaking in God's name, 'is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me?—I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats—Your new moons, and your appointed feasts, my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them:' Isaiah i. 11. 14.

But the most remarkable passage of this kind, and which deserves our particular attention, is the prophecy of Moses himself, recorded in the eighteenth of Deuteronomy: 'The Lord

thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren; like unto me, unto him ye shall hearken:' ver. 15. The same is repeated again, ver. 18. with this addition; 'And it shall come to pass, (they are the words of God) that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he (that prophet) shall speak in my name, I will require it of him:' ver. 19. Here now is a plain declaration on God's part, at the very time the law was established, of another prophet, like unto Moses, to be raised in time as a new lawgiver, to whom all were to yield obedience. I know full well that great authorities are produced for interpreting these words of a succession of prophets in the Jewish church; but be the authorities never so great, the appeal lies to the law and to the testimony, and thither we must go.

In the first place then, the text speaks of one prophet only, in the singular number, and not of many. In this case therefore the letter of the text is with us; an argument which ought to be of great weight with those who make such heavy complaints, whenever we pretend to go beyond the literal sense of the Old Testament. But,

Secondly, to expound this passage of a succession of prophets, and to say that they all were to be like Moses, contradicts God's own declaration concerning the manner in which he intended to deal with other prophets.

In the twelfth of Numbers we read that Miriam and Aaron began to mutiny against the influence and authority of Moses: 'Hath the Lord spoken only to Moses?' say they; 'hath he not spoken also by us?' This controversy was like to be attended with such ill consequences, that God thought proper to interpose himself. Hear then his determination: 'If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses.'

Here now is a plain declaration of the great difference between Moses and all other prophets, and as plain an account

wherein that difference did lie. As to all other prophets, God declares he would speak to them in visions and in dreams, but with Moses he would converse 'mouth to mouth,' or as it is elsewhere expressed, 'face to face.' Herein then consisted one chief dignity and eminence of Moses; and in this respect the prophets of Israel were not to be like him.

Thirdly, that the likeness to Moses, spoken of in the passage under consideration, had a special regard to this singular privilege of seeing God 'face to face,' is evident, partly from the text itself, and partly from the close of the book of Deuteronomy, compared with the text. In the text itself a promise is given of a prophet like Moses, which likeness in the 18th verse is expounded by God's saying, 'I will put my words in his mouth:' which imports something more than speaking to him in visions and in dreams; and that the likeness to Moses was understood to consist in this immediate communication with God, is most evident from the last verses of the book; where it is said, 'And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.' Who added these words to the book of Deuteronomy, it matters not at present to inquire; for they having been received in the Jewish church, are an authentic testimony, first, how the ancient Jews understood these words, 'like unto Moses;' and secondly, that the ancient church had seen no prophet like unto Moses. And yet they had a succession of prophets immediately from the death of Moses, of whom Joshua was the first;* and these last verses of Deuteronomy, added after, at least in the time of Joshua, exclude him from all pretensions of being 'the prophet,' or one of the prophets like unto Moses: and if this character will not fit Joshua, much less will it fit those who succeeded him, who were not greater, nor had greater employment under God than he; an evident proof that the promise of a prophet 'like unto Moses' was not understood by the ancient Jewish church to relate to a succession of prophets among them; since they declare to us that in the succession of prophets there had not been one like unto Moses.

The latter Jews have not departed from the opinion of their

* Hos. xii. 13. Ecclus xlvi. 1.

ancestors in this respect. They distinguish Moses from all other prophets, and the highest degree of inspiration is styled by them *gradus Mosaicus*. The difference between this degree and all others they make to consist in four particulars: 1. Moses had no dreams nor visions: 2. he had light from God immediately, without the ministry or interposition of angels: 3. his mind was never disturbed or dismayed by the prophetic influence, 'for God spake to him as a man speaks to his friend:' 4. he could prophesy at all times when he would; whereas others prophesied only at particular times, when the word of God came to them.*

Another chief dignity belonging to Moses, and in which the prophets under the law were not like unto him, is, that he was a lawgiver. No prophet after Moses was sent with such a commission during the time of the law; and yet the prophet here foretold was evidently to resemble Moses in this particular: 'He was to speak all that God commanded him; and whoever hearkened not to him, was to be destroyed.' Moses had no greater authority than this, nor can any words describe a greater. Besides, there is a circumstance belonging to this prophecy, which ties it down, I think, to this sense. Moses says, 'God will raise up unto thee a prophet like unto me, according to all that thou desiredst of him in Horeb, in the day of the assembly; saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God; neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, they have well spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him:' &c.

It is to be observed that this request of the people was made at the giving of the law in Horeb: Moses had often prophesied to them before, and they were not put under any terror by it; but when the law was delivered, and God 'descended in fire, and the whole mount quaked greatly,' they desired that Moses might speak to them, and not God, lest they should die. On this the promise is given, 'I will raise them a prophet like unto

* See Smith's select Discourses, p. 261.

thee, and put my words in his mouth.'. Is it not evident that this new prophet was to do that in a familiar gentle way, which God himself did in the mount surrounded with majesty and terror? And was not that the giving of the law? To apply this promise to any thing else is making it to have no relation to the request on which it was granted. The people liked Moses's ordinary way of prophesying to them so well, that they desired he might be employed to deliver God's laws to them in the same manner that he delivered God's other commands: the request related therefore merely to the manner of God's giving his law. They were under no uneasiness at his method in conveying prophecies to them; and consequently the promise of God must relate to the giving of a law to his people by one to be raised up among themselves, and not merely to a succession of prophets, about which the people were in no distress.

Lastly, if we inquire from historical evidence after the completion of this prophecy, we shall find that it did most punctually agree to the character of our blessed Saviour, and not to any other prophet, either before or after him: all the prophets of the Old Testament saw visions, and dreamed dreams; all the prophets of the New were in the same state. St. Peter had a vision, St. John saw visions, St. Paul had visions and dreams; but Christ himself neither saw visions, nor dreamed a dream, but had intimate and immediate communication with the Father; he was in the Father's bosom, he and no man else had seen the Father, was one with the Father, and had the fulness of the Godhead in him. Let any man now seriously consider this: Moses and Christ are the only two, in all the sacred history, who had this communication with God: the likeness to Moses is said directly to lie in this, of seeing God face to face. Can the promise then of raising a prophet like unto Moses be possibly applied to any other person than Christ Jesus? The other part of the parallel needs not to be insisted on; that Christ was a lawgiver will be easily admitted on all hands. But the execution of the threat annexed to this prophecy, is too remarkable to be passed over in silence; it has been literally fulfilled on the whole nation; every man who considers the state of the Jews from the rejection of Christ to

this day, must own that this part of the prophecy at least has been punctually verified.

This prophecy and many others seem, as I observed, intended for the Jews principally, to prepare them betimes for the reception of a new lawgiver, and to intimate to them that the Mosaic covenant was not to be perpetual.

Thus have I gone through the several periods of prophecy under the Old Testament, and endeavored to show the main design and use of it, opening a way to a fair and impartial consideration of the particular prophecies relating to each period. I conceived it seasonable, at a time when the argument from prophecy was exposed to open ridicule, to suggest some proper observations on the subject for the assistance of serious minds disposed to consider; to throw in one mite as an offering to the love of Christ and his gospel, in which I hope to live and to die.

FOUR DISSERTATIONS.

I. THE AUTHORITY OF THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. PETER.

II. THE SENSE OF THE ANCIENTS BEFORE CHRIST ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL. WITH AN APPENDIX.

III. THE BLESSING OF JUDAH, GEN. XLIV.

IV. CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION I.

DOUBTS thrown on the authority and genuineness of the second epistle of St. Peter, from the difference of style between it and the first. The assertion of Grotius that it was rejected by many churches, too strong. The difference of style allowed; but not such a difference as ought to create any doubt of the genuineness of the epistle: reasons for this given. No reason to think that St. Peter did not write both epistles himself. Probable grounds shown that this was the case. Comparison of the second chapter of St. Peter's second epistle with the epistle of St. Jude. Probable that both translated from some old Hebrew book. Language of St. Jude plainer and more simple than that of St. Peter. Many instances where the sentiments and notions of both are the same, but the manners of expression very different. This agreement and disagreement probably arose from both writers following the same copy in the Jewish language, and each translating for himself. The subject-matter common to the two epistles (2nd of St. Peter and Epistle of Jude) without doubt taken from some old Jewish author, by one or both of these writers. Reasons given why one was not a transcriber from the other. This may account for different styles in St. Peter's two epistles; also for the difference of style in the second epistle itself. But hence another objection may be taken against the authority of the second epistle of St. Peter. It is an old one against the epistle of Jude, that he quotes the spurious book of Enoch. Is not St. Peter's second epistle become liable to the same charge? For an account of this spurious book of Enoch the reader is referred to Fabri-

cius, in his Codex Pseud. Vet. Test. It was a mere romance full of Hellenistic inventions; but there is no evidence that this book was extant in the days of the Apostles, or that St. Jude quotes it. What the true ancient book was which he quotes, or what authority it had, is unknown; but it was not among the Jewish canonical books. Reasons however given why it might be used, which show that little regard is due to the ancient objection against the authority of St. Jude's epistle. Some notions indeed in which these two epistles agree, which could not possibly be drawn from any ancient Jewish book, being Christian notions peculiar to the gospel times. Passages which show this agreement given: these passages commented on. Shown from hence that there is no necessity to suppose that St. Jude transcribed St. Peter's epistle: more probable that both he and St. Peter wrote from the common plan communicated to the churches, and drew their description of the false teachers from the same apocryphal book. At any rate the old objection against the authority of the second epistle of Peter, drawn from the difference of style between his first and second epistles, is removed.

DISSERTATION I.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. PETER.

THE occasion I had in the first of the foregoing discourses to consider and compare together the two epistles of St. Peter, led me to inquire into the grounds and reasons of the ancient doubt concerning the authority and genuineness of the second epistle. It will be worth while to examine the fact, and state it fairly; which will enable us to judge whether this doubt is well founded or no.

The learned Grotius, in his Annotations on this epistle, observes, "that many of the ancients were of opinion that this was not an epistle of St. Peter the Apostle, induced thereunto by the difference of style between this and the first epistle, (acknowleged by Eusebius and Jerome,) and by this epistle's having been rejected by many churches." Huetius* reports the case more accurately, and tells us that this second epistle was, *inter dubias collocata ab aliquibus—propter styli cum priore discrepantiam:* "reckoned doubtful by some, because the style of it was different from that of the first epistle." This is the truth of the case, and this the only reason to be found in antiquity of the doubt concerning this epistle. Grotius's second reason, that this epistle was not received in many churches, is too strongly expressed, and not sufficiently warranted. Origen is the first, as far as appears, who mentions the doubt about this epistle: "St. Peter," he tells us, "left one epistle confessedly his, perhaps too a second; for of this there is doubt."†

* Demonstratio Evang. p. 21.

† Πέτρος—μίαν ἐπιστολὴν ὁμολογουμένην καταλέλοιπεν, ἔστω δὲ καὶ δευτέραν, ἀμφιβάλλεται γάρ. Origen. ap. Euseb. lib. vi. cap. 25.

Eusebius informs us, "that there never was any doubt of St. Peter's first epistle; but as to the second, the tradition was, that it was not canonical: nevertheless appearing to many (or to the generality) to be an useful piece, it was used jointly with the other Scriptures." * That this second epistle was received and used by the church in Eusebius's time, appears, I think, from this very passage: he says it was used with the other Scriptures, and that all the ground there was to doubt of its authority, was an ancient tradition, which probably was no other than the authority and report of Origen before cited. That this doubt ever affected whole churches, or that there were churches which rejected this epistle, does not appear: if this had been the case, it would have been a stronger objection against the authority of the epistle than the ancient suspicion, and more worthy of the historian's notice.

What submission is due to the doubts of antiquity, when we have only the doubt transmitted to us without the reasons on which it was grounded, I need not inquire; but surely when we have the reasons of the doubt preserved, we have a very good right to judge and inquire for ourselves. And this happens to be the case here: St. Jerome takes notice of this doubt, and tells us the reason of it: "the second epistle," says he, "is rejected by many, (or by most, *a plerisque*) because it differs in style from the first." †

The whole doubt, you see, is founded on a piece of criticism, started at first probably by some man of learning and figure, and followed implicitly by others. The usage and authority of the church, for aught that appears to the contrary, were on the side of the epistle, and prevailed at last against the learned observation; which was the very case of St. Jude's epistle, which for a like reason was rejected by many, but the general authority of the church prevailed to establish it: *auctoritatem*

* Τὴν δὲ φερομένην αὐτοῦ δευτέραν, οὐκ ἐνδιάθετον μὲν εἶναι παρειλήφαμεν· ὅμως δὲ πολλοῖς χρήσιμος φανεῖσα, μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων ἐσπουδάσθη γραφῶν. Lib. iii. cap. 3. Vid. cap. 25.

† Quarum secunda à plerisque rejicitur propter styli cum priore dissonantiam.—Catal. Script. Eccles.

*vetustate et usu meruit, et inter sanctas Scripturas comparatur.**

That there is a difference in the style of the first and second epistle of St. Peter is allowed; but it is not such a difference as ought to create any doubt of the genuineness of the epistle. One reason is, because this difference of style does not run through the whole epistle, but affects only one part of it; another reason is, that this difference may be more probably accounted for, than by supposing the second epistle to come from another hand than the first.

The second epistle is divided into three chapters: the first and the third stand clear of this difficulty, agreeing very well with the style of the first epistle. The second chapter is full of bold figures, and abounds in pompous words and expressions: it is a description of the false prophets and teachers who infested the church, and perverted the doctrines of the gospel; and it seems to be an extract from some ancient Jewish writer, who had left behind him a description of the false prophets of his own or perhaps earlier times; which description is applied both by St. Peter and St. Jude to the false teachers of their own times. If this be the case, where is the wonder that a passage transcribed from another author, and inserted into this second epistle, should differ in style from St. Peter's first epistle? especially considering that the style of this passage differs as much from all the rest of this second epistle, as it does from the first. St. Jerome † supposed, and others ‡ have followed his opinion, that St. Peter made use of different interpreters to express his sense in his two epistles; but had this been the case, the difference of style would have appeared in the *whole* epistle, and not in *one* part of it only, which is the present state: and I see no reason to think that St. Peter did not write both the epistles himself.

Were this nothing but a conjecture, yet so reasonable a one it is, that the doubt raised against this second epistle merely from this difference of style, could hardly stand before it.

* Hieron. Catal. Script. Eccl. † Epist. ad Hedibiam, qu. 2.
‡ Estius, Calmet, &c.

But we can go farther, and show on very probable grounds that this was indeed the case.

The very beginning of the second chapter of this second epistle shows that St. Peter had the image of some ancient false prophets before him, in describing the false teachers of his own time: 'There were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you:' verse 1. If you consider the character he gives of these false teachers, it will appear to be drawn from the description of the old false prophets: 'such they are,' he tells us, 'as have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness:' verse 15. A very natural thought this, and to be expected in a description of false prophets made by an ancient Jewish writer; but such a one as hardly would have occurred in an original description of the false teachers under the gospel. St. Jude has this comparison, and others of the same kind joined with it: 'They have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam, and perished in the gainsaying of Core:' verse 11. These are antique figures, and discover the age to which they belong: and St. Jude tells us plainly that these false teachers were *πάλαι προγεγραμμένοι εἰς τοῦτο τὸ κρίμα*, 'described' or 'set forth of old for this condemnation;' and it is very likely that both St. Peter and he had the old description before them, when they gave the character of the false teachers of their own times. St. Jude's epistle is so like the second chapter of St. Peter's second epistle, the figures and images in both are so much the same, as likewise the ancient examples and instances made use of, that it has been commonly thought that St. Jude copied after St. Peter's epistle; and yet the turn of words and expressions are so different; the choice of matter likewise is in part so different, some things being mentioned in one and omitted in the other; that it is much more probable that both copied from the same original, and drew from it according to their own judgments. I will give some instances of this, and leave the rest to the reader's own examination:

St. Peter.	St. Jude.
Ver. 4. Εἰ γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς ἀγγέλων ἁμαρτησάντων οὐκ ἐφείσατο, ἀλλὰ σειραῖς ζόφου ταρταρώσας παρέδωκεν εἰς κρίσιν τετηρημένους.	Ver. 6. Ἀγγέλους τε τοὺς μὴ τηρήσαντας τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀρχὴν, ἀλλὰ ἀπολιπόντας τὸ ἴδιον οἰκητήριον, εἰς κρίσιν μεγάλης ἡμέρας, δεσμοῖς ἀϊδίοις ὑπὸ ζόφον τετήρηκεν.
Ver. 6. Πόλεις Σοδόμων καὶ Γομόρρας τεφρώσας καταστροφῇ κατέκρινεν, ὑπόδειγμα μελλόντων ἀσεβεῖν τεθεικώς.	Ver. 7. Ὡς Σόδομα καὶ Γόμορρα, καὶ αἱ περὶ αὐτὰς πόλεις, τὸν ὅμοιον τούτοις τρόπον ἐκπορνεύσασαι, καὶ ἀπελθοῦσαι ὀπίσω σαρκὸς ἑτέρας.
Ver. 11. Ἄγγελοι ἰσχύϊ καὶ δυνάμει μείζονες ὄντες, οὐ φέρουσι κατ' αὐτῶν παρὰ Κυρίῳ βλάσφημον κρίσιν.	Ver. 9. Ὁ δὲ Μιχαὴλ ὁ ἀρχάγγελος, ὅτε τῷ διαβόλῳ διακρινόμενος διελέγετο περὶ τοῦ Μωσέως σώματος, κ. τ. λ.

St. Peter speaks of the angels that sinned; St. Jude gives an account of their sin, that they 'kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation.' This account of the angels' sin is no where else to be found in Scripture, but was, if I may guess, in the old book from which St. Jude transcribed; for it is very unlikely that he should add these circumstances, if he had only St. Peter's ἀγγέλων ἁμαρτησάντων before him. The very same difference may be observed in setting forth the example of Sodom and Gomorrah, which is common to both epistles: St. Peter speaks only of their judgment and of their being made an example to sinners; St. Jude adds an account of their crime: and though as far as the two epistles agree in respect to this instance, the images and ideas are the same, yet the turn of expression is very different. Again, St. Peter, verse 11. in reproof of the presumptuous and self-willed, who 'speak evil of dignities,' says, 'that angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusations against them before the Lord;' but here St. Jude has given us the history to which this belongs: 'Michael the archangel, when contending with the Devil about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, the Lord rebuke thee:' verse 9. These instances show that St. Jude did not merely

copy from St. Peter, but had recourse to the original itself, where these instances stood recorded, and took from thence such circumstances as he thought proper to set these examples in their full light.

If we compare the different manners of expressing the same thing in the two epistles, we shall hardly imagine that St. Peter and St. Jude had the same language before them to transcribe: it is much more probable that they both translated from some old Hebrew book; which will account for the difference of language between them, and the great agreement in their images and ideas. The following instances will make my meaning plain:

2 Peter ii.	St. Jude.
Ver. 6. Καὶ πόλεις Σοδόμων καὶ Γομόρρας τεφρώσας καταστροφῇ κατέκρινεν, ὑπόδειγμα μελλόντων ἀσεβεῖν τεθεικώς.	Ver. 7. Ὡς Σόδομα καὶ Γόμορρα κ. τ. λ. πρόκεινται δεῖγμα, πυρὸς αἰωνίου δίκην ὑπέχουσαι.
Ver. 10. Μάλιστα δὲ τοὺς ὀπίσω σαρκὸς ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ μιασμοῦ πορευομένους, καὶ κυριότητος καταφρονοῦντας. Τολμηταὶ, αὐθάδεις, δόξας οὐ τρέμουσι βλασφημοῦντες.	Ver. 8. Ὁμοίως μέντοι καὶ οὗτοι ἐνυπνιαζόμενοι σάρκα μὲν μιαίνουσι, κυριότητα δὲ ἀθετοῦσι, δόξας δὲ βλασφημοῦσι.
Ver. 12. Οὗτοι δὲ, ὡς ἄλογα ζῶα, φυσικὰ, γεγεννημένα εἰς ἅλωσιν καὶ φθοράν, ἐν οἷς ἀγνοοῦσι βλασφημοῦντες, ἐν τῇ φθορᾷ αὐτῶν καταφθαρήσονται.	Ver. 10. Οὗτοι δὲ ὅσα μὲν οὐκ οἴδασι βλασφημοῦσιν· ὅσα δὲ φυσικῶς, ὡς τὰ ἄλογα ζῶα, ἐπίστανται, ἐν τούτοις φθείρονται.

In these instances the language of St. Jude is much plainer and simpler than St. Peter's, and represents the meaning common to both espistles much more intelligibly; and whoever will be at the pains to examine the two epistles carefully, will find more instances of this kind, where the sentiments and notions are the same, and the manners of expression very different. Whence can proceed this agreement and disagreement at once? Had one transcribed the other, or had both copied from the same Greek author, the language of one epistle would

probably have answered more nearly to the language of the other; and yet the sentiments and notions of the two epistles are so much the same, that we must needs suppose the two writers to follow one and the same copy; and if we suppose this copy to have been in the Jewish language, and that each writer translated for himself, this will answer the whole appearance, and account as well for their difference as their agreement. The difference which appears in the parallel places last quoted, may indeed be accounted for on the supposition that St. Jude transcribed from St. Peter. He might intend perhaps to make plain the abstruse passages, and to that end might make choice of a plainer way of expressing himself. But the former passages cannot be thus accounted for, which will appear if we consider farther:

That the subject matter common to these two epistles was without doubt taken from some old Jewish author by one or both of these writers. That St. Jude had the old book before him, and did not merely copy after St. Peter, is evident; for he expressly quotes Enoch, meaning either a book under that name and title, or, which is more probable, some ancient book of Jewish traditions, in which some prophecies of Enoch were recorded. St. Jude, by telling us whence *he* had *his* description of the false prophets, has informed us at the same time whence St. Peter had the materials of the second chapter of his second epistle; which is the very same description, with such varieties as have already been observed. It is very remarkable, that notwithstanding this great agreement between the two epistles, St. Peter has an instance not to be found in St. Jude; and St. Jude has another not to be found in St. Peter. St. Jude quotes the prophecy of Enoch, of which St. Peter says nothing; St. Peter refers to the preaching of Noah, of which St. Jude says nothing. Supposing one to be a mere transcriber of the other, it is hard to account for this variation; especially considering that the preaching referred to by St. Peter under the name of Noah, and the prophecy referred to by St. Jude under the name of Enoch, relate to one and the same thing, the destruction of the old world. But if you will suppose both Apostles to use an ancient Jewish book, in which the prophecies of Enoch and Noah relating to the flood were

recorded, it is easy to account for the reference to Noah by St. Peter, to Enoch by St. Jude.

This may serve to account for the different styles in St. Peter's two epistles observed of old: I add, and for the difference of style in the second epistle itself; for the style of the second chapter is no more like to that of the other two, than it is to that of the first epistle. When a man expresses his own sentiments, he writes in his own proper style, be it what it will; but when he translates from another, he naturally follows the genius of the original, and adopts the figures and metaphors of the author before him. The eastern languages abound in high swelling ways of expression; and you may find in this one chapter of St. Peter more resemblance of this manner than in any other part of the New Testament; which is a farther confirmation of the account I have given.

But if this will help to clear one difficulty, will it not necessarily subject this second epistle of St. Peter to another? It is an old objection against the authority of St. Jude's epistle that he quotes the spurious book of Enoch; and for this very reason * his epistle was placed among the ἀντιλεγομένα, or doubtful, by the ancients. And is not Peter's second epistle become liable to the very same charge?

I will not trouble the reader with a long account, or any account of the spurious book under the name of Enoch, which made a very early appearance in the Christian church, and is quoted by Irenæus, Origen, and others about the same time. Whoever pleases to know the state of this book, may consult Fabricius in his Codex Pseud. Vet. Test. But,

It is no wonder that some ancient Christians, who took it for granted that St. Jude quoted the same book which they had under the name of Enoch, made it an objection against the authority of his epistle; for this book Enoch was a mere romance, and full of the idle inventions of some Hellenistic

* Judas frater Jacobi parvam, quæ de septem catholicis est, epistolam reliquit. Et quia de libro Enoch, qui apocryphus est, in ea assumit testimonium, à plerisque rejicitur. Tamen auctoritatem vetustate jam et usu meruit, et inter sanctas Scripturas comparatur.—Hieron. Catalog. Script. Eccl.

Jew. But then there is not the least evidence that this spurious book was extant in the days of the Apostles; nor indeed any kind of proof that St. Jude quotes a book called Enoch: it is more likely that he quoted some ancient book containing the traditions of the Jewish church, which has been long since lost, and probably contained many things relating to other ancient patriarchs and prophets as well as to Enoch; the loss of which was miserably supplied by forging books under the names of the patriarchs. To this we owe the Life of Adam, the Book of Seth, the Testaments of the Patriarchs, and many others of the like nature, which were spread abroad in very early days of the church.

What the true ancient book was which St. Jude quoted, by whom penned, or what authority it had in the Jewish church, no mortal can tell: this only we know, it was not among their canonical books. But let the book be supposed to have been of as little authority as you please, yet if it contained a good description of the ancient false prophets, why might not St. Peter and St. Jude make use of that description as well as St. Paul quote heathen poets? St. Peter plainly makes no other use of it, and therefore stands clear of countenancing the authority of the book: St. Jude goes farther, and quotes a prophecy out of it, as being an authentic one; and can you tell that it was not an authentic prophecy? I am sure the prophecy itself, as reported in St. Jude's epistle, was well founded, and was duly accomplished, and is in truth but the very prophecy which came from God to Noah; and very probably had been communicated before to Enoch, and by him to the old world. Was it ever made an objection against the authority of St. Paul's second epistle to Timothy, that he quotes some ancient apocryphal book for the story of Jannes and Jambres? Or is it any diminution to the authority of the gospel that our Saviour (as many learned think) quotes another such book under the title of the 'Wisdom of God,'* and appeals to it as containing ancient prophecies? If not, how comes it to be an objection against St. Jude's epistle that he quotes a prophecy of Enoch from the like authority?

* Luke xi. 49.

For these reasons little regard is due to the objection of the ancients against the authority of St. Jude's epistle: they supposed their spurious extravagant book Enoch to be the book quoted by St. Jude; and they reasoned on this supposition; for which in the mean time there was not the least appearance of proof or evidence; and the epistle itself was universally received in the churches notwithstanding this piece of criticism, as we are informed by St. Jerome, in the passage before quoted.

There are indeed some notions in which these two epistles agree, and which could not possibly be drawn from any ancient Jewish book; for these notions, of which I now speak, are Christian notions peculiar to the times of the gospel.

The passages which show this agreement, are these chiefly which follow:

2 Peter ii.	Jude.
Ver. 1, Ψευδοδιδάσκαλοι, οἵτινες παρεισάξουσιν αἱρέσεις ἀπωλείας, καὶ τὸν ἀγοράσαντα αὐτοὺς δεσπότην ἀρνούμενοι,	Ver. 4. Παρεισέδυσαν γάρ τινες ἄνθρωποι,—ἀσεβεῖς, τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν χάριν μετατιθέντες εἰς ἀσέλγειαν, καὶ τὸν μόνον δεσπότην Θεὸν καὶ Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἀρνούμενοι.
Ver. 13. Σπῖλοι καὶ μῶμοι, ἐντρυφῶντες ἐν ταῖς ἀπάταις αὐτῶν, συνευωχούμενοι ὑμῖν.	Ver. 12. Οὗτοί εἰσιν ἐν ταῖς ἀγάπαις ὑμῶν σπιλάδες, συνευωχούμενοι.
Ch. iii. 2. Μνησθῆναι τῶν προειρημένων ῥημάτων ὑπὸ τῶν ἁγίων προφητῶν, καὶ τῆς τῶν ἀποστόλων ἡμῶν ἐντολῆς τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ Σωτῆρος· Τοῦτο πρῶτον γινώσκοντες, ὅτι ἐλεύσονται ἐπ' ἐσχάτου τῶν ἡμερῶν ἐμπαῖκται, κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας αὐτῶν ἐπιθυμίας πορευόμενοι.	Ver. 17. 18. Ὑμεῖς δὲ, ἀγαπητοὶ, μνήσθητε τῶν ῥημάτων τῶν προειρημένων ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ὅτι ἔλεγον ὑμῖν, ὅτι ἐν ἐσχάτῳ χρόνῳ ἔσονται ἐμπαῖκται, κατὰ τὰς ἑαυτῶν ἐπιθυμίας πορευόμενοι τῶν ἀσεβειῶν.

In the first of these passages the παρεισέδυσαν of St. Jude has a plain resemblance and reference to the παρεισάξουσιν of St. Peter; both words are formed on the same notion, and are

meant to describe the craft and subtle insinuation of the new false teachers. The 'turning χάριν εἰς ἀσέλγειαν' in St. Jude answers the αἱρέσεις ἀπωλείας in St. Peter; and for the rest, the passages are nearly the same, and refer to gospel notions.

If the second passage of St. Peter be read, as it ought to be, according to the Alexandrian Manuscript, which has ἀγάπαις instead of ἀπάταις, it agrees exactly with St. Jude's; and the feasts peculiar to Christians are meant in both places. The third passage relates to the Apostles of Christ; and it is the principal passage to incline one to think that St. Jude had St. Peter's epistle before him; for he seems to take what is proper to his own purpose, and the subject of his epistle; and to leave that which has a peculiar reference to the former part of St. Peter's epistle, and to which there is nothing in his own to answer. St. Peter in the first chapter of this second epistle, and likewise in his first epistle, tells the Christians of the ancient prophecies, foreshowing the deliverance near at hand: he warns them likewise against the 'new false teachers' in this second epistle: therefore collecting the purpose of his epistles, he says that he wrote to them to remind them, 1. 'of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets:' 2. and of the command of the Apostles, which command respected the scoffers in the last days. But St. Jude, who had said nothing of the ancient prophecies, and had spent his whole epistle in describing the iniquity of the false teachers, reminds them only of the 'words spoken by the Apostles of Christ Jesus,' who had, together with the doctrine delivered to them, forewarned them 'that there should be mockers in the last time.'

I see no inconvenience in supposing that St. Jude had as well the epistle of St. Peter as the old Jewish book, which contained the description of the ancient false prophets and the prophecy of Enoch concerning them, before him at the same time. If these last passages prove that he had St. Peter's epistle, his express quoting of Enoch shows that he had the other. In following the old book, and enlarging from thence the instances made use of by St. Peter, and expressing in words of his own the sentiments of the original author, without confining himself

to the version of St. Peter, he did no more than it is natural for any man to do in a like case. But perhaps there may be another account to be given of this agreement between these two epistles, by referring them to some farther common source or original.

St. Jude calls on the Christians to whom he wrote to remember τῶν ῥημάτων προειρημένων ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀποστόλων τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 'the words which were spoken before of the Apostles of Christ.' They who do not place St. Jude in the number of Apostles, are under no difficulty here; it was natural for one of a lower rank to refer to the authority and predictions of Christ's Apostles. But what must we say for St. Peter, who makes the same appeal, and was undoubtedly an Apostle of Christ himself? Did he think that he had less authority, or was less to be regarded than other Apostles? Or for what reason did he appeal to that authority in others, which he had right to insist on himself? This matter is something mended by our English version, 'be mindful—of the commandment of us, the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour.' But the order of the words in our Greek copies will not bear this rendering, τῶν Ἀποστόλων ἡμῶν: to answer our version, we must read ἡμῶν τῶν Ἀποστόλων: thus St. Paul often speaks, ἐγὼ Παῦλος, 'I Paul;' but never Παῦλος ἐγὼ, 'Paul I.' And since there is evidently a dislocation of the word ἡμῶν in St. Peter, and it must be placed elsewhere, it ought probably to be placed, as St. Jude has placed it, after Κυρίου; and then the English version must be thus, 'the commandment of the Apostles of our Lord and Saviour.'

There must be something particular in this case; otherwise for an Apostle to appeal to the authority of Apostles as something superior to his own, is not very natural. But if we suppose that the Apostles had a meeting on this great case of the 'new false teachers,' and that they gave jointly, by common consent and deliberation, precepts proper to the occasion, to be communicated to all churches, no single Apostle would or could, in this case, call the common injunction 'his commandment,' but would certainly call it, in the language of St. Peter, 'the commandment of the Apostles of our Lord.' St. Paul was an Apostle, yet was it no disparagement to him to carry the de-

cree of the Council of Jerusalem to the churches of his plantation; and in writing or speaking he could not but have called it the 'decree of the Apostles.' The case might be the same here.

We have some evidence to show that this was the case. That there was such a tradition, at least in the church, is evident from the Apostolical Constitutions; in which there is mention made of a meeting of the Apostles on the very account of these false teachers, so particularly described by St. Peter and St. Jude. In the thirteenth chapter of the sixth book, these false teachers are described to be such as πολεμοῦσι Χριστῷ καὶ Μωσεῖ, 'fight against Christ and Moses,' pretending at the same time to value both; and thus the false teachers, mentioned in both epistles, communicated with the church, whilst they corrupted its faith: they were, ἐν ταῖς ἀγάπαις σπιλάδες, 'spots in the church's feasts:' Jude 12. They are ordered to be expelled in the Apostolical constitutions, that the lambs might be preserved ὑγιᾶ καὶ ἄσπιλα, 'sound and without spot.' They are represented in the Apostolical Constitutions as the false Christians and false prophets foretold in the gospel; Θεὸν βλασφημοῦντες, καὶ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καταπατοῦντες; which agrees exactly with St. Jude's account of them, that they had been foretold by the Apostles, and that they 'denied the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ:' ver. 4.—and with St. Peter's likewise: 'who bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them:' ii. 1.

At this meeting it is said instructions were given to be communicated to all churches by their respective Apostles and bishops; there were probably then many circular letters sent on this occasion: the second epistle of St. Peter, and St. Jude's epistle, seem to be of this sort; and being drawn on the same occasion, and on the same instructions, it is no wonder they agree so well together.

There are in the epistles themselves some marks which confirm the foregoing account: the very word ἐντολῆς, used by St. Peter when he makes mention of the Apostles' authority, points out some particular and distinguished precept; for he does not seem to refer to the general preaching or doctrines of the Apostles, but to some special command or form of doc-

trine relating to the false teachers. This is that ἐντολὴ παραδοθεῖσα mentioned in the close of the foregoing chapter, 'the commandment delivered to the faithful,' to guard them against the corruptions of the false teachers, and to show them τὴν ὁδὸν τῆς δικαιοσύνης, 'the way of righteousness.' This warning, so solemnly given, would, as the Apostle insists, be an aggravation in the case of all such as, having been made thus acquainted with the way of righteousness, should nevertheless turn aside ἐκ τῆς παραδοθείσης αὐτοῖς ἁγίας ἐντολῆς, 'from the holy commandment delivered unto them.'

St. Jude plainly says that his epistle was written purely on the account of the false teachers; that his intentions were to have written to them περὶ τῆς κοινῆς σωτηρίας, of the common doctrines of salvation; but that he had quitted the design, being 'necessitated' (ἀνάγκην ἔσχον) to write to them to strive for the faith delivered to the saints, in opposition to the false teachers who had stolen in among them.

The sense of this passage is lost in our translation, as it is likewise in both the interpretations proposed by Erâsmus on the place; in which he has been followed by most of those who came after him. Interpreters have been misled by confounding the κοινὴ σωτηρία and the παραδοθεῖσα πίστις together, as if they meant one and the same thing; whereas they mean quite different things. The 'common salvation' here spoken of means the doctrines of the gospel published to all the world, without respect to difference of times or seasons, or to particular doctrines of the corrupters of the faith: the παραδοθεῖσα πίστις is the same with the παραδοθεῖσα ἐντολὴ in St. Peter, the 'form of sound doctrine,' sent to all the churches by direction of the Apostles, in opposition to the false teachers. This then is the meaning of St. Jude, and thus it may be paraphrased: "Beloved, I was intent on the design of writing to you on the common doctrines and hopes of the gospel, for the improvement of your faith and knowlege in Christ Jesus; but I find myself obliged to lay aside this design, and to warn you against a present danger, to exhort you to earnestness in contending for that true doctrine once already delivered to you and all the faithful, in opposition to the false teachers who are crept in unawares among you."

The Arabic and Ethiopic versions have both preserved this

sense in some measure: the Arabic comes very near the true meaning; the sense of which the Latin interpreter has thus expressed: *O dilecti mei, omni studio adhibito ut scriberem vobis de salute perfecta universali, atque communi, coactus sum scribere vobis, deprecans ut soliciti sitis in fide quæ semel tradita est sanctis.* The Ethiopic version speaks of this 'faith once delivered to the saints' as superadded to the common teaching, and consequently as distinct from the κοινὴ σωτηρία, 'the common salvation.'

But to come nearer our point, the agreement of the two epistles in the description of the false teachers: it is to be observed that both St. Peter and St. Jude profess to write as reminding their churches of things with which they had before been made acquainted.* St. Jude says expressly that the very subject of this letter had once already been known unto them: ὑπομνῆσαι δὲ ὑμᾶς βούλομαι, εἰδότας ὑμᾶς ἅπαξ τοῦτο, ὅτι ὁ κύριος λαὸν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου, κ. τ. λ. The word ἅπαξ used here is the same we met with before: the ἅπαξ παραδοθεῖσα πίστις, and the εἰδότας ὑμᾶς ἅπαξ τοῦτο, are relative to the same matter; and it appears that the warning against the false teachers, and the prophetic description of them, were sent to the churches together with the (ἐντολὴ) commandment. It appears, likewise, that both St. Peter and St. Jude wrote their epistles after this commandment had been delivered to the several churches; for they write to them 'reminding' them of what they had before received.

This being the case, there is no necessity to suppose that St. Jude transcribed St. Peter's epistle: it is much more probable that both he and St. Peter wrote from the common plan communicated to the churches, and drew their description of the false teachers from the same apocryphal book. But be this as it will, yet on all views the second epistle of St. Peter stands clear of the old objection drawn from the difference of style between his first and second epistles.

* Compare 2 Peter iii. 2. with Jude 5.

SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION II.

INTENTION of the writer to trace the sense of the Jewish church, regarding the Mosaic history of the fall. No records left to give light on the subject but the books of the Old Testament; and no book of the Old Testament treats directly of this subject after Moses. No aid to be expected from the historical writers: some little from the moral and prophetical. The moral and theological difficulties relating to this point are not stated in this inquiry: reasons given. History of the fall traced in the ancient writers. Oldest book remaining is that of Job. Its testimony shown to be distinct from and previous to that of Moses. The antiquity of this book supposed, two questions arise: 1. whether the fall of Adam was known to its writer: 2. what notion he had of the circumstances and consequences of it. It is shown that the writer had a knowlege of Adam's fall from the discourse of Sophar in the 20th chapter; from Job's vindication of his own integrity, chap. 31.; from his magnifying the power of God in chap. 12.; and from the words of Job respecting the crooked serpent in chap. 26. It is shown also that the writer had a knowlege of the consequences of the fall, and of the state of the world after it, from chap. xxxvii. 12. 13. xxxviii. 23. 8. 15. ix. 7. xxxvi. 31. &c.: the origin of the general corruption and depravity of mankind is indicated in chapter xv. 14., and particularly in chap. xiv. 1. 2. 3. 4. A material question still remains; viz., what hope or expectation this ancient writer had of a deliverance from the evil and corruption which prevailed. In answer, it is observed that the argument of this whole book

supposes man to be accountable to his Maker for the good or evil of his actions: from chap. xiv. 2. 10. 12. and chap. xvii. 14—16. it is argued that Job expected a resurrection in the day of God's visitation; and this exposition is supported by the famous passage chap. xix. 25. &c. Many learned men, among whom is Dr. Patrick, understood in this latter passage a temporal deliverance expected by Job: reasons given which seem to favor this exposition; these probably inclined the Jewish interpreters to confine it to a temporal sense. Grotius lays great stress on their opinion: he also thinks that they who interpret it of a resurrection, depart from the original Hebrew. It is happy that this learned person has given his own sense of the passage, as it shows that no just interpretation can be given that excludes the notion of a resurrection. Consideration of what light may be had by examining the passage itself, and the sentiments on which it is founded. The degree of light and knowlege contained in the passage, which seems disproportionate to the age of Job, accounted for. The conduct of Job's friends seems unaccountable; for if they allowed and believed this great truth of a resurrection, why did they continue to press their argument, and insist that he was undoubtedly wicked because miserable? Examination of this case; the circumstances of which, duly observed, cast a great light on it, and are a means of opening to us its true meaning. It appears then that Job's friends understood him to speak of a resurrection to judgment, and not of a temporal deliverance. This passage shown to be no inconsiderable argument of the reality of the history contained in the book of Job, and of its antiquity. Reason given why the writer has been so long in his examination of this book; is very short in what follows. Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, considered as the production of one and the same age: little found in these on the subject of the fall, and the promise made to Adam: reasons of this. The case was much the same with the succeeding pro-

phets; and of the later writers none treat expressly on the subject; their mention of it is only occasional. All assistance in this case must come from hints and allusions, which refer to ancient things. Collection and comparison of these to the end.

DISSERTATION II.

THE SENSE OF THE ANCIENTS BEFORE CHRIST ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL.

My intention is not to search after passages in heathen authors, which may seem to bear some resemblance to the Mosaic history of the fall, but to trace the sense of the Jewish church as far as it can be collected.

As there are no records left but the books of the Old Testament to give light to this inquiry, and no book of the Old Testament after Moses treats directly of this subject, it cannot be expected that I should produce a full and regular exposition of the circumstances and consequences of the fall from so few remains, and in this respect so very imperfect. All that can be done is to gather up the little which fell from these old writers, rather accidentally than purposely; and to try whether, from their references and allusions to this history, we can with any tolerable degree of probability collect their sense, or the sense of the times in which they lived, on this subject. The historical writers of the Old Testament were never led within view of this ancient story by the occurrences in which they are concerned; from them consequently no light is to be expected. Moral writers had sometimes occasion to reflect on the state of the world, and to consider how things came into the state and condition in which they found them: prophets, likewise, who were teachers of religion, were in the same case; from these we may expect some assistance.

You see within how narrow a compass we are reduced; but yet no help is to be refused which can be had in so material a concern.

The moral and theological difficulties relating to this point

will not be stated or discussed on the foot of this inquiry. It was the wisdom of antiquity to bury all such difficulties in the abyss of infinite wisdom and power, and there to leave them till God should think proper to bring them to light; and had we something of the same spirit, it would be the better for us. But the most curious and inquisitive have no reason to expect a solution of all the difficulties of this sort from the teachers of the gospel; for what has the gospel to do with them? The moral and natural evils in the world were not *introduced* by the gospel; why then must the gospel be called on to account for them, rather than any other religion or sect of philosophy? If there had never been an Old Testament, never a New one, mankind would have been at least as corrupt and miserable as they are at present. What harm then have the Old and New Testaments done to you, that you perpetually challenge them to account to you for the evil you suffer? You mislike perhaps the story of Adam and Eve, and can by no means digest the account of the serpent's tempting and prevailing against our first parents. Very well; let this account then be laid aside, and what are you now the better? Is there not the same evil remaining in the world, whether you believe or believe not the story of the fall? And if so, what account do *you* pretend to give of it? for if you pretend to any religion, you are as liable to be called to this account as any professor or teacher of the gospel. Nobody is exempt in this case but the atheist; and his privilege comes from hence, that he has no account to give of any thing; for all difficulties are alike on his scheme.

Leaving then these difficulties, which are common to all religions, and not peculiar to our present inquiry, let us proceed to trace the history of the fall in the ancient writers.

The oldest book we have remaining is the book of Job; there is all the appearance that can arise from internal characters, that it was written before any of the books of Moses. The testimony therefore of this book is distinct from the authority of Moses, since it was not derived from the books of Moses, but was itself an original account of the state of nature and religion in the old world, before Moses had committed any thing to writing. I know that some have endeavored to bring down this ancient writer to the times of the Babylonish cap-

tivity, and suppose the book to have been written for the consolation of the captives in their distress. But if you suppose it written for the sake of the Jews, is it not strange that there should not be, in a discourse of such a kind, one single word of the law of Moses; nor so much as one distant allusion to any rite or ceremony of the law, or any one piece of history later than Moses; nor to any of the forms of idolatry for which the Jews suffered at the time of their captivity? The conjecture would be as ingenious and as well founded, should any critic suppose that the Iliad of Homer was written to celebrate the military expeditions of the Goths and Vandals. Besides, were it proper to enter into the discussion of this point, it might be easily shown that the Book of Job had quite another view than this opinion supposes. The patience of Job is much talked of, and we seldom look farther for any use of this book; but in truth the book was written in opposition to the very ancient opinion, which introduced two independent principles, one of good, the other of evil. For this reason Satan, the author of Job's misfortunes, is brought in with a permission from God to afflict Job; and the moral of the history lies in Job's reflexion: 'the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away:' and again, 'shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?' 'In all which,' as the history expressly observes, 'Job did not sin with his lips;' intimating how prone men were to sin with their lips when they talked of the evils of life and the author of them. The learned Grotius supposes this book to be written for the consolation of the descendants of Esau, carried away into the Babylonish captivity. He saw plainly, I suppose, that the book could by no means answer to the case of the Jews, as well for the reasons already mentioned as for this likewise, that the Jews undoubtedly suffered for their iniquity; and the example of Job is the example of an innocent man suffering for no demerit of his own. Apply this to the Jews in their captivity, and the book contradicts all the prophets before and at the time of their captivity, and is calculated to harden the Jews in their sufferings, and to reproach the providence of God. But suppose it written for the children of Esau; they were idolaters, and yet is there no allusion to their idolatry in all this book; and what

ground is there to think that they were so righteous as to deserve such an interpretation to be put on their sufferings as the book of Job puts on them, if so be it was written for their sakes? or can it be imagined that a book written about the time supposed for the use of an idolatrous nation, and odious to the Jews, could ever have been received into the Jewish canon? Whatever therefore we may think of the book in its present state, there is little doubt but that it was formed on authentic records of greater antiquity than any book now remaining.

The antiquity of the book supposed, two questions arise to be considered, 1. whether the fall of Adam was known to this ancient writer: 2. what notion he had of the circumstances and consequences of the fall.

The twentieth chapter of Job contains the discourse of Sophar the Naamathite on the state and condition of the wicked: he takes his rise from the very beginning; his words in our translation are these: 'Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed on the earth, that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment? Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds, yet he shall perish for ever like his own dung.' The first verse might as well have been rendered, 'since Adam was placed on the earth.' There is no reason to doubt but that this passage refers to the fall, and the first sin of man: the date agrees, for the knowlege here taught is said to arise from facts as old as 'the first placing man on earth?' The sudden punishment of the iniquity corresponds to the Mosaic account —'the triumphing of the wicked is short, his joy but for a moment.' Above all, the nature of the crime and of the punishment here described are strong presumptions on this side: Adam's ambition was to be like God, and he had the tempter's word to assure him he should be so: how aptly is this ambition described in the passage before us? 'Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds:' that is, (as the Syriac and Arabic versions render the verse,) 'though in his pride he ascend up to heaven, yet shall he perish for ever.' Adam's punishment was death: 'to dust shalt thou return.' The punishment, as described in the book of Job, is, 'he shall perish for ever:' but how or in

what manner? Why, 'like his own dung;' that is, by returning to earth again. That the Chaldee paraphrast understood this whole passage to relate to the fall, seems evident by his exposition of the fourth verse, where he takes notice of the accuser or tempter as well as of the offenders: *gaudium impiorum finitur cito, et lætitia delatoris ad momentum.* What *delator*, or accuser, do we read of at the time of Adam's being placed on the earth except the tempter? to whom the name of the adversary, or accuser, was afterwards appropriated; and it is the character, in this very book, of the spirit permitted to plague and torment Job; which is one evidence, by the bye, that the paraphrast understood the same person to have been concerned in both cases; in the tempting of Adam, and in the tormenting of Job. Our own version, the Vulgate, and Montanus's, agree in one sense; 'the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment:' but who is this hypocrite, appearing at the very first placing of man on earth? It was neither Eve nor Adam; they were bold and hardy, and distrustful of God, but showed no guile or hypocrisy in the whole transaction. But the tempter's part was all hypocrisy; he showed great concern for the prosperity of those whom he meant to destroy, and well deserves this character; and the Chaldee paraphrast has reason in fixing it on him.

The next passage that occurs is but a bare allusion to one circumstance in the history of the fall, and that not a very material one. In the thirty-first chapter Job vindicates his integrity in many particulars; one is, that he was ever ready to acknowlege his errors. On which occasion his words are—'if I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding my iniquity in my bosom.' The marginal reading of our bible is, 'after the manner of men.' Other versions give the same sense; but the Chaldee paraphrase agrees with our translation. The allusion of Adam's hiding himself is proper and apposite; but if you read, 'after the manner of men,' the passage is an accusation of others, and the vindication of himself has a mixture of pride in it which does not suit the character of the speaker.

In the twelfth chapter Job magnifies the power of God in making and disposing all things: at verse 16. we have these

remarkable words: 'With him is strength and wisdom; the deceived and the deceiver are his.' If nothing more is meant by this than that the cunning man as well as the weak man is under the power of God, it is an observation that needed not to have been prefaced with an express declaration of God's great wisdom and power; nor should it be placed, as it is, among the greatest works of Providence, the creation of the world, the destroying it by the flood, the settling and enlarging the nations of the earth, and straitening them again: in the midst of these great accounts of Providence stands this observation, 'the deceived and the deceiver are his.' This therefore must be something relating to the general condition of mankind, and must be understood to be an instance of God's Providence in the great affairs of the world. And for this reason it is very probable that the words were meant of the fall of man through the cunning of the tempter. It was directly to the purpose of the Book of Job to assert and maintain the superiority of God over the deceiver, who, by this very means of bringing evil into the world, had grown up, in the opinion of many, into a rival of the power and majesty of God.

There is another passage in this book of Job very like to the former, which, considered and compared with it, will leave little room to doubt of its true meaning. The passage I mean is in chap. xxvi.: they are the words of Job: 'By his Spirit he (God) hath garnished the heaven; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.' How come these disagreeable ideas to be joined together? How comes the forming of a crooked serpent to be mentioned as an instance of Almighty power, and to be set, as it were, on an equal foot with the creation of the heavens, and all the host of them? Read the whole chapter; all the images there of divine power are great and magnificent: 'Hell,' we are told, 'is naked before God, and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth on nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the

proud: his hand formed the crooked serpent.' Can you possibly imagine that the 'forming the crooked serpent' in this place means no more than that God created snakes and adders? This surely cannot be the case!

If we consider the state of religion in the world when this book was penned, it will help to clear this matter up. The oldest notion, in opposition to the supremacy of the Creator, is that of two independent principles, as has been already observed; and the only kind of idolatry mentioned in the book of Job (and it was of all others the most ancient) is the worship of the sun and moon and heavenly host; from this Job vindicates himself, chap. xxxi. 'If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand: this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge: for I should have denied the God that is above.' Suppose now Job to be acquainted with the fall of man and the part ascribed to the serpent in the introduction of evil, and see how aptly the parts do cohere. In opposition to the idolatrous practice of his time, he asserts God to be the maker of all the host of heaven, 'by his Spirit hath he garnished the heavens.' In opposition to the false notion of two independent principles, he asserts God to be the maker of him who was the first author of evil; 'his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.' You see how properly the garnishing of the heavens and the forming of the serpent are joined together.

That this was the ancient traditionary explication of this place, we have undeniable evidence from the translation of the LXX, who render the latter part of this verse, which relates to the serpent, in this manner, προστάγματι δὲ ἐθανάτωσε δράκοντα ἀποστάτην, 'by a decree he destroyed the apostate dragon:' the Syriac and Arabic versions are to the same sense. These translators applied the place to the punishment inflicted on the serpent; and it comes to the same thing; for the punishing the serpent is as clear an evidence of God's power over the author of evil as the creating him.

The old commentator on Job, printed among the works of St. Jerome, though he chiefly pursues a mystical sense, yet has left us a plain intimation how he understood these words: *edu-*

citur ab eis (i. e. ab animabus sanctis) et de cordibus earum excluditur ille, in quo nihil est rectum, COLUBER TORTUOSUS.

We need not wonder to see so much concern in this book of Job to maintain the supremacy of God, and to guard it against every false notion; for this was the theme, the business of the author. He gives, as it were, an epitome of his design in these remarkable words delivered by Job: 'God is wise in heart and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?' ix. 4.

The mention of the serpent in this manner in the book of Job is the more to be regarded, because this book being, as I conceive, older than the Mosiac history, it is an evident proof that the account of Moses is the ancient account of the fall, and not a story dressed up by himself to serve any particular ends or purposes.

But let us proceed to consider what notions this writer had of the consequences of the fall, and of the state of the world after it. The general corruption of the world has been observed in all times, and it is not worth the while to be particular in proving that this ancient writer had the same sense which others had of the condition of mankind. He mentions the flood, 'the overturning the earth by waters,' as he styles it; but this too is an uncontested piece of history. One observation he has which deserves our regard, that all the works of nature are prepared by God to be his instruments either for judgment or for mercy. Of the clouds he says they are made to 'do whatsoever he commandeth them on the face of the world in the earth. He causeth it to come, whether for correction, or for his land, or for his mercy:' xxxvii. 12. 13. 'The treasures of snow and hail are reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war:' xxxviii. 23. It seems not improbable to me that these reflexions arose from the methods made use of by Providence (not worn out of memory in this writer's time) in punishing the old world, in consequence of the curse laid on the ground. Such methods they are by which the ground may at any time be cursed, and the toil and labor of men increased, to what degree God thinks fit. And it is to be noted that the blessing promised to Noah on the resto-

ration of the earth, is expressed by the regular successions that should continue from that time, of 'seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter;' which is but a promise, in other words, that the hail and snow and the waters of heaven should be no longer instruments of judgment, but of mercy. In the thirty-eighth chapter God is introduced setting forth his own great works of wisdom and power; 'he laid the foundations of the earth; he shut up the sea with doors; he commanded the morning and the day-spring:' after which it follows, 'from the wicked their light is withholden.' This passage might be thought to allude to the Egyptian darkness, did it not refer to a much older date, and stand among the earliest of God's works as an instance of his power from the beginning. The same reflexion occurs in this writer more than once; it is mentioned again chap. ix. and numbered among the judgments of God: 'He commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars.' Again, chapter xxxvi. after mention of the clouds and of light, it follows, 'By them judgeth he the people.' To what ancient piece of history do all these allusions refer? We have nothing remaining on record to which the application may be made. This only I find, that when God restored the earth, and gave his blessing to Noah, one promise is, that 'day and night shall not cease:' a strong intimation that clouds and darkness, storms and tempests, had greatly prevailed before for the punishment of the old world. These expressions, you will say perhaps, were used in the eastern countries metaphorically: it is true I find them so used in this very book of Job, xxii. 11. But what was the foundation of the metaphor? Metaphors do not arise out of nothing; and there was some reason why 'scaling up of stars, and darkening the sun,' were expressions made use of to denote a state of sorrow and distress. Job's affliction is described by one of his friends in this manner: 'Sudden fear troubleth thee, or darkness that thou canst not see, and abundance of waters cover thee.' The first expression is plain; the second and third are metaphorical. Why the judgments of God are represented by the overwhelming of waters, every man may understand who knows the history of the flood. But how will

you account for the second metaphor? or why is he said to 'be without the sun,' who suffers under trouble or affliction in this life? In this manner Job himself complains: 'The days of affliction prevented me, I went mourning without the sun:' xxx. 28. The same figure is applied in like manner by the prophet Amos; 'Seek him—that turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: v. 8. And again: 'I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day, and I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation:' viii. 9. So the prophet Joel: 'The day of the Lord cometh—a day of darkness and of gloominess.' 'The sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:' Joel ii. 1. 2. 10. And the prophet Isaiah: 'The stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evils, and the wicked for their iniquity:' Isa. xiii. 10. 11. But this is not a very material point, and therefore I need not enlarge on it.

As to the origin of the general corruption and depravity of mankind, this ancient author seems to suppose that all men are corrupt by descent and inheritance: 'what is man that is born of a woman that he should be righteous?' Job xv. 14. The same question is asked again Job xxv. In both these places there may be some reason perhaps to think that uncleanness is charged on man comparatively only, and with respect to the transcendent purity of God; which is a very different thing from the uncleanness derived from the fall. But there is another passage which will not admit of this construction: in chapter xiv. Job represents the miserable condition of man: 'Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble; he cometh forth like a flower and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.' On this representation he expostulates his case with God: 'Dost thou open thine eyes on such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?' These last words plainly refer to the first, and show the ground of the

other expostulations: 'What is man that he should be clean? and he that is born of a woman that he should be righteous?' For in this fourteenth chapter the question is not, whether man is pure compared to God, but whether he has purity enough left in his present state to make him a fit object of judgment. This seems to be the sense of Job's expostulation: "Why art thou extreme to mark all my errors? Is it reasonable to expect purity of a man born of a woman, who is by the very condition of his birth unclean?" I shall be easily persuaded that Job had not entered into all the niceties relating to this point, but I shall not easily believe that he charged God foolishly, by imputing uncleanness to the works of his creation. For tell me on what ground this expostulation stands, 'how shall man be clean that is born of a woman?' Why not clean? Did God make woman or man unclean at the beginning? If he did, the expostulation would have been more apposite and much stronger, had the true cause been assigned, and Job had said, "How canst thou expect cleanness in man, whom thou createdst unclean?" But as the case now stands, the expostulation has a plain reference to the introduction of vanity and corruption by the sin of the woman, and is an evidence that this ancient writer was sensible of the evil consequences of the fall on the whole race of man. Moses tells us, 'Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image;' and St. Paul, 'that we have borne the image of the earthy.' The notion is the same as expressed by Job, 'can a clean thing come out of an unclean?'

There is still a very material question behind; namely, what hope or expectation had this ancient writer of a deliverance from the evil and corruption which prevailed over the whole race of man.

In answer to this question, I observe, in the first place, that the argument of this whole book supposes man to be *accountable* to his Maker for the good or evil of his actions. This point is not disputed between Job and his friends; they differ widely sometimes in their notions of God's method of justice towards men; but it is an allowed principle on all sides, that God is man's judge as well as his Maker. Secondly, that the wicked often prosper in this world, and go down in peace to

the grave, is a proposition maintained by Job in many places, but particularly and fully in chapter xxi. Let us see then whether his conclusion be agreeable to these premises.

In the fourteenth chapter Job pleads his cause with God, reminding him of the infirm state and condition of man: 'he cometh up as a flower, and is cut down. He giveth up the ghost, and where is he? He lieth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more.' The question here asked, 'where is he?' may import that Job did not suppose death to be the final destruction of man. A like passage we find chap. xvii. 'I have said to corruption, thou art my father; to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister. And where is now my hope? As for my hope who shall see it?' Not the men of this generation, for 'they shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.' But such questions do sometimes amount to negatives. Where is he? No where. What is my hope? Nothing. Their determinate sense therefore must be collected from the context. When a man gives up the ghost, 'where is he?' The meaning of which question is explained in the following words, for 'man lieth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more.' Where is he then, or what is he, in the intermediate space? You may reply perhaps, that this expression, 'till the heavens be no more,' may very well signify that man shall never rise more; and to show the contrary, it ought at least to be proved that Job had a notion that the heavens should one day be destroyed, and that new heavens and a new earth should succeed. But if this expression be doubtful in itself, yet it is reasonable to expound it to the sense which ancient tradition best supports. And this we certainly know from writers both sacred and profane, that it was a very old opinion that the present frame of nature should be one day dissolved, and be succeeded by a renovation of all things, by new heavens and a new earth. And therefore Vatablus, a very learned and judicious commentator, makes no doubt of referring this passage to Job's expectation of a resurrection in the day of God's visitation. This exposition is supported by another famous passage, made familiar to us by being a part of our burial office: 'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day on the earth;

and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me:' xix. 25. &c. Many worthy and learned men have understood this place of a temporal deliverance expected by Job. The late pious and worthy bishop of Ely, Dr. Patrick, particularly, has followed this sense in his Paraphrase on the Book of Job. What he says on the 26th verse will show his meaning perfectly, and therefore I need transcribe no more: his paraphrase is this; "and though the worms which have eaten my skin, should proceed to consume the rest of this wretched body, yet I feel my soul inspired with a comfortable belief, that before I die I shall see myself restored by the mercy of God to a happy estate." Job's condition indeed was such that the description in the text ('though after my skin worms destroy this body') will suit his case exactly, and we cannot necessarily collect, from the expression only, that he thought of the corruption of the grave. The other expression ('in my flesh shall I see God') may likewise signify his seeing God before he put off his flesh, that is, before he died. And there is still another reason, which has often weighed with me on the side of this exposition, which is this; that if we expound this passage in Job of a future resurrection, it contains a degree of knowlege in this great mystery beyond the proportion of light communicated to the age in which he lived. Moses has no such express promise or prophecy, nor is there any evidence that the Jewish church for many ages had such knowlege. It is the peculiar character of our Saviour, that 'he brought life and immortality to light through the gospel;' and yet what do we know from the gospel more than is contained in this passage, if it is indeed a description of a future resurrection, to be brought to light by a Redeemer, 'who shall stand on the earth at the latter day?' These reasons, I imagine, inclined the Jewish interpreters to confine the sense of this passage to a temporal deliverance only. For should they admit a future resurrection to be here intended, how would it consist with the preference they give to themselves, above all other nations, in the knowlege of religion? Can they easily be persuaded, do you think, that Job, who was an alien from the commonwealth

of Israel, had a clearer and more distinct knowlege of this great mystery than God thought fit to reveal to the Jewish church? Besides, this description in the book of Job, admitting that it relates at all to a future resurrection, is so consonant to the doctrine of the gospel, and is indeed so strong a prophecy of the office and character of Christ Jesus, that it is no more to be expected of a Jew that he should see and acknowlege this sense of the passage, than that he should subscribe to the interpretation of other ancient prophecies, in the sense in which they are applied in the New Testament. It is strange to me to observe what stress the very learned Grotius lays on the consent of the Jewish interpreters in this case: "they are," says he, "inquisitive after every thing that may with any appearance be applied to the resurrection, but this passage of Job they never so apply." And reason good; the Jews without doubt would be glad to find in their own law whatever appears to them to be excellent in the gospel, that they may show the little need there was for the gospel revelation. But would they be equally glad to find clearer knowlege of divine truth among the ancient Arabians than among the descendants of Abraham? or to see a plain prophetical description of the grand article of the gospel, even before the giving of their own law?

The same learned person has another objection against those who interpret this passage of a resurrection. He thinks, with others to whom he refers, that they all depart from the original Hebrew (*coacti sunt in versionibus suis multum ab Hebræo discedere.*) It is happy that this learned hand has given us what he judges to be the true sense of the passage; for it shows that no just interpretation or translation can be given of these words, which will exclude the notion of a resurrection. Grotius's own sense, expressed according to the original, is so far from shutting out of this notion, that it can hardly be made to agree with any thing else.* For what do those words mean,

* Hebræa sic sonant: Scio ego Redemptorem meum vivere, et illum postremo staturum in campo. Etiamsi non pellem tantum meam, sed et hoc (nempe arvinam quæ sub pelle est) consumerent (morbi scilicet) in carne tamen mea Deum videbo (i. e. propitium experiar.) Ego, inquam, hisce meis oculis. Ego, non autem alius

'mine eyes shall behold, and not another:' (*hisce oculis meis; ego, non autem alius pro me.*) If Job's thought was, that he should be restored to his former health and prosperity in this life, why does he guard against the suspicion that it might be another, and not himself who should be restored? Had he ever seen a transmutation of persons in this world, or heard of any man who ceased to be himself, and became another? Diseases may waste the body, and often do to a great degree; but we never are afraid that they will destroy the person, or change the man. What is it then that Job guards against? If you apply this passage to the resurrection, this circumstance, that he himself, and not another for him, should see God, is the most expressive of his hope. Death, to all appearance, destroys the person, the whole man; and though possibly there may be a renovation of the world, yet still it is difficult to conceive how individual persons shall be so preserved through all the changes of many ages, as at the last day to find themselves to be themselves again.

But farther: the words in the original, which we render, 'he shall stand at the latter day on the earth,' are in Grotius's translation thus expressed, *illum postremo staturum in campo;* by which he means, 'he shall keep the field, (*quod victoris est*) which is a mark of conquest.' Allow this, and what do they suffer who apply this passage to the resurrection? The restoring life to the world is represented as the greatest victory and triumph: St. Paul says, 'Christ must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.' The expression therefore, as expounded by Grotius, has nothing inconsistent with an application of the whole passage to the resurrection.

But the original word 'haphar' is never used, that I can find, to signify 'a field,' much less 'a field of battle;' and I

pro me.——Deus Redemptor dicitur, quia pios ex multis malis liberat. Ps. lxxviii. 35. Esa. xli. 14. xliii. 14. xliv. 6. xlvii. 4. Postremum in campo stare est victoris. Sic Deum dicit victorem fore adversariorum suorum. Neque vero ei esse impossibile corpus ejus, putredine propè exesum, restituere in priorem formam; quod et fecit Deus.—Grotius in loc.

very much question whether 'keeping the field' was an expression of victory of so old a date as the book of Job. It seems to me to belong to the times when war was become more an art than it was in the times of Job: conquerors then did not use to keep the field; and why should they, when one battle commonly decided the point, and the conquered had nothing to do but to fly, and the conqueror to pursue? And even now keeping the field is the lowest idea of victory, and signifies little more than not being routed; and was this a fit image to represent the all victorious power of the Almighty? Does it not convey to the mind the notion of a great struggle for victory, of great difficulties in obtaining the conquest? And is such a notion agreeable to the book of Job, which seems to be written on purpose to show that God has no rival in power?

But let us see what light may be had by considering the passage itself, and the sentiments on which it is formed.

It is apparent that Job founds his hopes, whatever they were, on the power of his Redeemer; and therefore we may expect to find, in what is said of him, plain marks and characters of power. 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' This is a just reflexion, and proper to the case; and if you consider these words as spoken by a man, in his own opinion ready to expire under grief of mind and pain of body, they necessarily imply a hope extending itself beyond the grave. His thought is this: I am dying, but I know my Redeemer shall never die; and therefore I will still trust in him for deliverance. But where is the sense or comfort of this, on supposition that nothing can be done to help us after death?

'And that he shall stand at the latter day on the earth.' (*Veahharon hal haphar jakoum.*) This circumstance surely is not insignificant; and yet what does barely standing on the earth import? Is it any mark of power or dignity to stand on the earth, on which so many thousand weak and miserable things stand every day? The original words therefore (supposing 'haphar' to mean the earth) should, I conceive, be rendered to this sense, 'and that he shall at the latter day arise with power over the earth.' The same expression, and in the same sense, is used 2 Chron. xxi. 4. 'When Jehoram was risen (*va-jakom hal*) up to the kingdom,' that is, to rule and govern

it as a king. Many other instances might be given of this manner of speaking, which will easily occur to those who inquire after them. See Noldius in voc. (Hal.) page 688. In this sense Job affirms that his Redeemer should stand on the earth as a king stands over his kingdom, to govern it, and to do justice and judgment. This consideration to an innocent man, suffering undeservedly, was a great comfort; and a proper character it is of the Redeemer, on whose power Job's hope intirely depended.

But commodious as this sense is, there is this objection to it, that haphar rarely, if ever, signifies the earth in that sense in which it must be here taken: haphar may be, and is translated earth, when earth is equivalent to dust. For instance, it is indifferent whether we say, man shall return to the earth again, or man shall return to the dust again from whence he was taken. In this therefore, and in like cases, you will find haphar rendered by γῆ, *terra*, earth, by Greek, Latin, and English translators. But when the earth is spoken of as the habitable world, as the place which God made for man, or as the place subject to God's power and dominion, it is not styled haphar. And yet if you take haphar in the proper sense, as it signifies dust, the image that arises is quite improper to the turn of thought in this place. To stand on the dust, to be founded on the dust, are expressions signifying a weak and tottering condition. To sit on the dust, and lye in the dust, are phrases descriptive of a state of misery and distress. Job therefore, who is contemplating the power and might of his Redeemer, could not say that at the latter day he should stand on the dust; which would, according to the idiom of his country, be saying, he should be weak and like a house built on the sand, ready to fall. But,

There is another use of the word haphar frequently to be met with, and which will suit all the circumstances of this place. We read in Genesis that man was formed of the dust (haphar) of the ground; and in the book of Job xxxiv. 15. we read, 'all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto (haphar) dust.' From these and many other passages, it appears that haphar is the proper word to signify the dust out of which man was made, and into which all dead bodies are ulti-

mately resolved. Consider now what Job's hope is, 'though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:' he puts the case of his being utterly destroyed, and his body reduced to dust and ashes, and yet his confidence is that he should in his flesh see God: and if you take the reason he gives for his hope, as it will come out on this sense of the word, you will find a propriety and justness in the whole passage. As for myself, says he, I am wasting away, and this body shall soon return to dust again; but my Redeemer will abide for ever, and I know that he will at the latter day arise with power over (this) dust, and in my flesh I shall see God. You see how the parts agree. Job, though sensible that he should soon return to dust, yet trusted in God, knowing that he could as easily restore him from dust, as he at first made him and all men out of the dust of the ground.

There is a circumstance belonging to this passage, and which ought to be considedred with it, to which Grotius has said nothing, and which can hardly be reconciled with the opinion that Job expected no more than a temporal deliverance. The case is this: Job being tired with the opposition of his friends, and the perverse construction they made of his misfortunes, as if he must needs be as wicked as he was miserable, appeals from them to another judgment: 'Oh,' says he, 'that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day on the earth.' You see how strongly Job insists on his plea; though men would not receive it, yet he wishes it were 'graven in the rock for ever;' that it might remain till the time in which God would come to judge his cause; 'for I know,' says he, 'that my Redeemer liveth.' Suppose Job to expect a future time of judgment, the whole passage is exceeding beautiful and proper. "I find," says he, "that my complaint is disregarded here; that man has no compassion for me; and that God in his unsearchable wisdom suffers the innocent as well as the guilty to be unfortunate in this life: but the time will come when my plea shall be heard; and so satisfied am I in the righteousness of it, that I would have it remain as my monument for ever, 'graven in the rock;'

for though I myself shall soon be gone, yet my Redeemer lives, and will at the last day call me from the grave, and with my own eyes shall I see God my Saviour." But if you suppose Job to expect only a temporal restitution, within the compass of his own life, to what end or purpose does he so passionately wish to have his complaints rendered immortal? What sense is there in saying; "Oh that my complaint which you despise may never be forgotten, for I know that within a little time I shall be restored by God to all my glory and former felicity, and shall have no cause to complain any more." In one view the images are lively and passionate, and the sentiment just and proper; in the other there is neither force nor vigor, nor propriety; nor indeed hardly any sense.

As to the degree of light and knowlege contained in this passage, and which seems disproportionate to the age of Job, there is this to be said: there might possibly be among the few faithful in the world a traditionary exposition of the promises of God, grounded on more express revelations, made either before or soon after the flood, than have come down to our times; or as Job was tried in a very extraordinary manner, he might have as extraordinary a degree of light to support and maintain him in the conflict. There is nothing in either of these suppositions but what is conformable to the methods of divine Providence; nothing that intrenches on our blessed Lord's office, who was appointed 'to bring life and immortality to light through the gospel.' It is by Christ, and by him alone, that we have God's covenant of immortality conveyed to us; but yet the ancient prophets had a sight of the blessing at a distance, as is evident from many of their predictions.* And why might not Job be so honored as well as others who lived before the days of our Saviour?

But still there is something that seems very unaccountable in this matter; for if Job's friends allowed and believed this great truth of a future resurrection, how is it that they continue to press their argument, and to insist that he was undoubtedly wicked, because miserable? How is it that they

* See Dr. Clark's Discourse concerning the Connexion of the Prophets, &c. p. 12, 13.

do not reply to this argument, and show the reasoning to be false, if they apprehended it to be so? Or if this knowlege was peculiar to Job, how is it that they are not surprised at such new, such strange doctrine? And yet no such marks have been observed (as far as I have seen) by any interpreters. The book of Job is in the nature of a drama, in which several persons appear discoursing one with another; and how could such a material assertion as this pass unobserved by all the speakers? One would imagine from such conduct that Job's friends understood him to speak only of his hope in this life, which they might entertain as a vain delusion, and deserving no regard.

But I am persuaded the case will appear otherwise on a strict examination; and that the circumstances relating to this passage, duly observed, will cast a great light on it, and be a means to open to us the true and genuine meaning of it.

The argument between Job and his friends turns on this point, whether the afflictions of this world are certain marks of God's displeasure, and an indication of the wickedness of those who suffer? Job's friends maintain the affirmative, and in consequence of it charge Job with great iniquity, for no other reason but because they saw him greatly miserable. This they thought was doing honor to the justice of God; but Job calls it 'speaking wickedly for God, and talking deceitfully for him; and accepting the person of God,' chap. xiii.; as corrupt judges accept the persons of great men when they give sentence partially in their favor. As to himself, he resolutely maintained his innocence; but still he depended on the justice and goodness of God notwithstanding his present distress. His character cannot be better described than in his own words: 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him:' chap. xiii., ver. 15. It is plain from hence that Job's friends confined the exercise of God's justice within the scene of this world, and looked no farther; but he, vexed with continual reproaches, applies himself to God in certain expectation of another time for justice: 'Oh that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time, and remember me!' chap. xiv. 13.

What time was it, do you imagine, that Job desired to be appointed for him? Was it the time of this life? If so, how could it succeed his 'being hid in the grave?' No; he had other hopes, and expected to be called from the grave, and seems assured that God would not desert his creatures even there; 'Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands:' ver. 15. He had before declared his notion, 'that man lieth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more:' ver. 12. And presently he declares that all things were drawing to an end, the earth and the inhabitants thereof. 'Surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place. The waters wear the stones. Thou washeth away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth, and thou destroyest the hope of man. Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth:' ver. 18. 19. 20. Thus far Job. Let us see now how this new argument is entertained by his friends. The first who replies is Eliphaz the Temanite: he appears quite astonished, and asks Job where he had this knowlege, whether he had the secret of God, and had engrossed all wisdom to himself; he tells him they were no strangers to the ways of God, but had heard as much from their fathers as Job had, though he pretended to the knowlege of such secret things. But take his own words: 'Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made before the hills? Hast thou heard the secret of God? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself? What knowest thou that we know not? what understandest thou which is not in us? With us are both the grey-headed and very aged men, much elder than thy father. Are the consolations of God (which we have instructed thee in) small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee?' chap. xv. ver. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. After this strong expostulation he returns to his old argument, and offers many proofs, from ancient tradition, of God's immediate vengeance on the wicked. The next who answered Job is Bildad the Shuhite: he talks in the same strain, and reproaches Job with his pretence to secret knowlege above others. 'Wherefore,' says he, 'are we counted as beasts, and reputed vile in your sight?' chap. xviii. ver. 3. And because Job had talked as if the heavens should cease to be, and that the earth and its

inhabitants should fail, and the rock be removed out of his place, Bildad thinks him even distracted with passion, and reproaches him with his wild conceit: 'He teareth himself in his anger: shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall the rock be removed out of his place?'* chap. xviii. ver. 4. As if he had said, "What is this wonderful man, that he expects to see all things destroyed, the earth and the heavens to pass away, that there may be a proper time to do him justice? Is it not more reasonable to think that God will do justice here than that all the works of nature should be destroyed to make way for judgment? Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine:" ver. 5.

These repeated provocations drew from Job that noble declaration of his faith and hope which is the subject of our present inquiry. In the next chapter he gently rebukes his friends for their severe reproaches for his supposed error: 'and be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with myself:' chap. xix. ver. 4. It affects not you, why then are ye so enraged? He goes on to acknowlege, in the first place, that all his misery was from the hand of God; and that he cried in vain, being not regarded by God or by man: 'I cry aloud, but there is no judgment:' ver. 7. But then, so far was he from being ashamed of the error imputed to him, that he appeals again with great solemnity to the future judgment of God: 'Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day on the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.' Job's meaning in this solemn appeal may be understood from another like passage: 'also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high. My friends scorn me: but mine eye poureth out tears unto God:' chap. xvi. ver. 19. 20. From these reasons and circumstances laid together, it appears to me

* Τί γὰρ, ἐὰν σὺ ἀποθάνῃς, ἀοίκητος ἢ ὑπ' οὐρανόν; 'What, if you die, must the earth under the heavens be uninhabitable?'—LXX.

evident that Job's friends understood him to speak of a resurrection to judgment, and not of a temporal deliverance; otherwise what occasion was there to reproach him with pretending to be wiser than all men, to know the secret of God, beyond what the first man knew, or any who succeeded him? What reason was there to charge him with an opinion, that 'the earth should be forsaken for his sake?' His temporal deliverance surely could hurt neither the earth nor its inhabitants. Add to this two other charges brought against Job's opinion by Eliphaz, and not yet taken notice of; he calls his notion unprofitable, speeches that can do no good, nay, which are hurtful; 'for,' says he, 'thou casteth off fear, and restrainest prayer before God:' chap. xv. ver. 4. His thought was plainly this: if once Job can persuade men that God does not interpose to execute judgment in this life, but reserves all things to a distant, far distant day of visitation, when the heavens shall be no more, there will be an end of all fear of God, an end of all prayer and supplication to him.* Taking it in this light, we see how the charge arises; but could he possibly charge Job's hope of temporal deliverance with such consequences? If not, it is a great evidence in what manner he understood Job; and I think we need no other interpreter.

This very passage is to me no inconsiderable argument of the reality of the history contained in the book of Job, and of the antiquity of the book itself: for supposing the book to be a mere poetical fiction, on what ground of probability does the author furnish Job with such exalted sentiments of religion, and at the same time suppose them to be such secrets to all his friends? Are there any such instances in any author? Cicero in his dialogues introduces philosophers of different opinions, but we find them all acquainted equally with the common notions of their own times; and it would be absurd in any author to suppose the contrary without very evident reason; and there can be no such reason but the evidence of history. Consequently the book of Job must be founded in history, and not in invention. In the time of Job true religion was preserved

* This sense of the passage is confirmed by a like reflexion in the Book of Job, chap. xxi. from verse 7. to 15.

among a few, and communicated by special revelation; whether therefore Job had himself this knowlege by prophecy, or received it by tradition in his own house from those who had, he might very well know what his friends and neighbors knew not. This circumstance is natural and agreeable to the times, supposing the history to be true; but it is unnatural, and without probability, which is the very life of poetical fiction, supposing the book to be a mere fable or parable.

I have been much longer in examining these passages in the book of Job than I intended; but this book is so obscure and hard to be understood, that I found it would be to little purpose to produce the passages without endeavoring to fix the meaning of them. And if I have not mistaken in so doing, the time has not been ill employed; for the evidence arising from this book is in all respects considerable; and it is of great moment to see those great strokes of true religion, and of God's purpose from the beginning with respect to the children of men, preserved in an author who cannot be charged with Jewish education or prejudices; but who was born in another country, of another family, and does not appear to have heard of Moses, or his law, and yet the secret of God was with him.

I will be very short in what follows.

We may consider the Book of Psalms, the Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, as the productions of one and the same age; and there is no reason to think but that the writers had the same opinions in the subject-matters of our inquiry. If we find less than it may seem reasonable to expect from these writers on the subject of the fall, and the promise made to Adam, there is a plain reason to be given why it is so; for the great promises made to David of a son 'whose kingdom should endure for ever,' had eclipsed all the ancient hopes, and so intirely possessed the mind of the Psalmist and of his son Solomon, that they seldom look higher than the immediate promises of God to themselves. And yet God's method of opening gradually his purposes to different ages was understood by Solomon, who tells us that 'the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day:' Prov. iv. 18. The case was much the same with the succeeding prophets; they were ministers of new declarations made by God, and had

no occasion to treat of the old. And of the later writers, none treat expressly of this subject; if ever they mention it, it is only occasionally and *in transitu*. All the help therefore to be had in this case must come from hints and allusions, and ways of speaking, which refer to ancient things, and show the writer's sense concerning them. Thus when Solomon tells us, 'he applied his heart to know the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness;' and then declares the result of all his inquiry, 'Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions:' Eccles. vii. 25. 29.—when he tells us that 'there is not a just man on the earth that doeth good, and sinneth not:' ver. 20.—not one who can say, 'I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin:' Prov. xx. 9.—when David tells us that he was 'shapen in iniquity, that in sin did his mother conceive him,' Psalm. li. 5. and that in the 'sight of God no man shall be justified,' Psal. cxliii. 2. —when we read in the book of Wisdom, that 'God made not death, neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living: for he created all things, that they might have their being; and the generations of the world were healthful: and there is no poison of destruction in them; nor the kingdom of death on the earth. For righteousness is immortal. But ungodly men with their works and words called it to them:' Wisd. i. 13. 14. 15. 16.—and again, that 'God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity. Nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world; and they that do hold of his side do find it:' Wisd. ii. 23. 24.—when the Son of Sirach tells us that 'error and darkness had their beginning together with sinners,' Ecclus. xi. 16. that 'death is the sentence of the Lord over all flesh,' Ecclus. xli. 3. that 'the covenant from the beginning was, Thou shalt die the death,' Ecclus. xiv. 17. that 'of woman came the beginning of sin, and through her we all die,' Ecclus. xxv. 24. that God, at the first, 'filled man with the knowlege of understanding, and showed him good and evil,' Ecclus. xvii. 7. 'and left him in the hand of his (own) counsel,' Ecclus. xv. 14. —when, I say, we read and compare all these passages together, can there be any reasonable foundation to doubt in what sense

the ancient Jewish church understood the history of the fall, or what consequences they ascribed to it?

When we find the wicked and the enemies of God represented under the image of a serpent, Isa. xiv. 29. xxvii. 1. Micah vii. 17. of Leviathan the crooked serpent; of a dragon, Isa. xxvii. 1.—when we hear the wretchedness of the idolater described by the prophet in the following terms, 'he feedeth of ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside that he cannot deliver his soul:' Isa. xliv. 20.—and when we hear David singing the triumphs of his son, to whom the everlasting kingdom was promised, in such strains as these, 'his name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed:' Psalm lxxii. 17. 'His enemies shall lick the dust:' ver. 9. 'He shall tread on the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shall he trample under feet:' Psalm xci. 13. 'He shall bruise his enemies with a rod of iron:' Psalm ii. 9.—when we hear likewise the prophet describing the kingdom which he foretold, in like figures, and representing the state of the wicked under that kingdom in these very words, 'and dust shall be the serpent's meat,' Isa. lxv. 25.—can we give any tolerable account of these things, but by supposing David to understand that the Son promised to him, in whose time righteousness and truth were to be established, was the very seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head? Could the prophets understand their prediction to belong to any other, when the triumph of his reign was to be a victory over the serpent, 'whose food should then be dust?' Of the same person David and the prophets foretel that he should rule over all nations, that 'men should be blessed in him, that all nations should call him blessed;' which is the distinguishing character of the blessed seed promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. From all which it is evident that the seed of the woman, who should bruise the serpent's head; the seed promised to Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed; the Son promised to David to sit on his throne for ever; and the king who should rule out of Sion, foretold by the prophets, is ONE and the SAME person: that the purpose of God in giving the word of prophecy was the same in every

age: that Christ has, under different degrees of light, been set forth from the beginning as the hope of the world: that he it was whose day the faithful in every age desired to see: he it was, 'who preserved the first formed father of the world, that was created alone, and brought him out of his fall:' Wisdom x. 1. He it is who shall reign till 'all enemies are put under his feet, till death and hell are cast into the lake of fire:' Rev. xx. 14.

AN APPENDIX

TO THE

SECOND DISSERTATION:

BEING

A FARTHER INQUIRY INTO THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT OF THE FALL.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following additional Dissertation was drawn up some years since, and was intended as an examination of the objections made to the history of the fall by the author of the literal Scheme of Prophecy. That author has been dead some years, and I have now nothing to say to him; and have therefore considered the objections not as his, but as common to all who call in question or are offended with the history of the fall as it stands recorded by Moses.

SUMMARY OF

APPENDIX TO DISSERTATION II.

MAIN difficulty consists in what we are to understand by the *serpent:* in order to this we must examine distinctly what is ascribed to this serpent. Circumstances considered which lead us to conclude that it was a real serpent that had part in the transaction: Gen. iii. 1. 14. 15. Circumstances on the other side considered, which lead us to suppose it was not a real serpent. True import and meaning of the prophecy examined, and whether any real difficulty lies in the way of a reasonable inquirer. It is shown that if there be any truth at all in this history, we must suppose the tempter to have been a rational agent, and an evil being. This tempter being mentioned under the name and character of a serpent, there have been various opinions to account for this circumstance. The two most considerable ones are, first, that which supposes a real serpent under the management of the evil being; second, that which supposes the evil being to have transacted the whole himself, and that the term serpent is used metaphorically to denote this evil being. Both have some support from the text, and both have difficulties; but it is shown that neither the substance of the history, nor the conclusion to be drawn from it, is affected by this difference of opinion. Arguments of those who are for the literal sense stated. Arguments of those who oppose them, and are for the metaphorical sense. The author's opinion, that a real serpent was seen by Eve,

Reasons given to show that the tempter appeared and acted as a serpent, and a judgment passed on the visible agent in this fraud was a judgment on the deceiver himself. Objection against this interpretation, from the kind of punishment inflicted on the woman and the serpent, answered. It is shown from the parable of the tares, and our Saviour's exposition of it, that he understood the Devil to be the tempter. This opinion, that the Devil made use of the serpent in his first deceit, shown to acquire some strength from the serpent having been a great instrument of idolatry in all times. Return to the history of the fall. In opposition to what has been observed with regard to the hopes given to Adam and his posterity by the sentence on the serpent, it is said that there is not the least intimation of any victory of man over the serpent: this answered. The exposition however will not necessarily lead us farther; but a little reflexion will show us that since all was lost by disobedience to God, nothing can be regained but through his favor, unless there be one more mighty than him to rescue us out of his hands. It is a material inquiry, connected with the history of the fall, and affecting the foundation of all religion, to know on what ground we have hope towards God. The question is, whence this hope is derived. From revelation and the promises of God, says the author. From natural reason contemplating the attributes of God, say others, who think that the attributes of God are a sufficient foundation whence poor weak man may hope for certain mercy. Little is wanted to convince us that the condition of mankind, into which they were brought by no voluntary act of their own, affords arguments for pity, and grounds for hope, from a merciful God. But what is this to the case before us, or to the main question concerning the foundation of religion, which had a beginning before one poor weak man was born into the world? this point enlarged on. The not making a distinction between the original hopes of nature, and the hopes that may be derived from the present

state of the world, has been a great prejudice against revealed religion and those who defend it. There is one difficulty in every scheme of natural religion; the religion and morality which nature teaches, is such as nature in her present weak condition is unable to perform: to mend this matter, the mercy of God is called in to the assistance of man's weakness; but the very call for mercy and pardon shows the original duty and obligation to have been transgressed: this point enlarged on. It is shown that it was necessary to convey hope to Adam, to be the foundation of religion, and that hope was conveyed when sentence was passed on the offenders. To this it is answered, No; the necessity of revealing hopes of mercy is plainly not complied with; and no such hopes, or color for them, are contained in this transaction. For these assertions no reasons are given but what are founded in a mere literal interpretation of the transaction; and it does not on that scheme do justice to the text. It may seem strange that we should imagine any blessing at all in this which is a judicial proceeding against offenders; and stranger still, that we should search for this blessing on the man, in the part which was directed against the serpent, and which contained God's curse against him for his deceit. Considerations proposed to clear this difficulty. Exposition of another prophecy of ancient date, so like to this in language and ideas, that the comparison reflects light on both: this prophecy is found in the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis, and relates to the tribe of Dan; *Dan shall be a serpent by the way*, &c. The language of the first prophecy, representing the victory of the woman's seed by *bruising the serpent's head*, has been continued in later prophecies: hence we read of power given over serpents and scorpions, of treading on the adder and the dragon. The known use of this language in Scripture, and the application of it to the promised seed, helps us to account for one of the arts made use of by the tempter on our Saviour, when he wished to know whether

Jesus was the Son of God: this explained. If we look into the world, where sin and death rule with such absolute dominion, we shall want no other proof of the completion of the first part of the prophecy of the fall. Reasons given for confidence that the time will come when the loss of the fall shall be fully repaired.

APPENDIX TO DISSERTATION II.

THE main difficulty consists in determining what we are to understand by the serpent, who is represented by Moses as the tempter and deceiver of our first parents. In order to this, we must consider distinctly what is ascribed to this serpent.

This serpent, we are told, 'was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made:' Gen. iii. 1. The comparison here being made between this serpent and the beast of the field, intimates to us that this serpent was really a beast of the field; for between the beast of the field and beings of a higher order no comparison properly lies in respect to their subtlety and understanding.

Again; the curse denounced against this serpent is adapted to the state and condition of a natural serpent, and is literally applicable to no other kind of being: 'Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: on thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel:' Gen. iii. 14. 15.

These are the circumstances in the history which lead us to conclude that a real serpent had part in this transaction. On the other side,

This serpent appears to have the use of language and of reason: nor is it said that these faculties were conveyed to him on this occasion, (which is the case of Balaam's ass, it being expressly noted in the text, that 'the Lord opened the mouth of the ass:') Numb. xxii. 28. but these faculties are mentioned as natural to this serpent. When he talks and reasons with Eve, Moses relates this fact as an historian.

This serpent talks and reasons, not on such trivial things of which we may suppose the beast of the field (if they have any reason) to have some notion; but he reasons on the nature of God and of man; on the knowlege of good and of evil; on the nature and tendency of the law given to man: he looks back and reflects on the policy in which that law was founded, and the art of the governor in keeping his subjects in ignorance and blind obedience: he looks forward and foretels the happy consequences of throwing off this yoke, and persuades the woman that she and her husband 'should be as gods,' if they could have the courage to break through the restraint of this iniquitous law.

What think you now? Are these the properties of a mere brute creature? Or is there any instance of an author who ever seriously introduced the beast of the field thus reasoning and thus discoursing?

And yet there are who suppose this serpent to be a mere beast of the field and no more, and reckon that Moses recounting this story, intended to relate what passed between a mere natural serpent and Eve as the most plain matter of fact. We are told too that this interpretation is suited to the notions of the ancients, who thought beasts had, in the first ages of the world, the use of speech; in which remark the truly ancient are much abused. For these ancients, as they are called, were indeed moderns with respect to the times of which they give judgment; and there is not the least footstep of evidence that ever there was such an opinion in the world. Men of later ages, misled by the ancient way of writing, may have imputed such an absurdity to the times long before their own; but that ever any age, or any reasonable man in any age, had really such a persuasion, there is not the least pretence to affirm. The story of Balaam's ass is pretended to be a proof that the ancients had such a notion; but consult the text, and you will see this story is recorded not as a most plain, but as a most miraculous matter of fact: and wherever ancient history reports as matter of fact that any brute creature spoke, the thing is always treated as a prodigy, and the effect of some supernatural power; and the story commonly ends in consultation of the oracle among the Greeks, and he Sibylline books among the Romans, to know how the

amen was to be averted and the Gods appeased, who were ever thought concerned in such surprising events.

We read in Scripture that 'the trees went forth at a time to anoint a king over them: and they said unto the olive-tree, Reign thou over us:' &c. Judges ix. 8. This, I suppose, will not be taken for another most plain matter of fact, and construed as if the ancients had a notion that trees also could speak in the first ages of the world. But if we must depart from the literal meaning in this case, what are the rules of criticism that oblige us to maintain it in the principal case before us? Surely it is not more unnatural for trees to hold a council for the choice of a king, than for a mere serpent to treat with Eve on the subject of her obedience to God, and the nature and tendency of the law of paradise.

But we are so used to fables, and this of the trees is so evidently such, that we may perhaps imagine that we see a difference in these two cases, without troubling ourselves to examine the grounds of such judgment. Let us see then whether this way of literal interpretation will suit other places better. We read in Numbers, that 'a star shall come out of Jacob,' &c. Numb. xxiv. 17. 'Jacob' literally means the patriarch so called; but he had been long dead before this saying was heard; and had he been living, the same difficulty would occur in ascertaining the literal sense of the word 'star.' It is said of God, in the book of Psalms, 'Thou breakest the heads of the dragons in the waters:' Ps. lxxiv. 13.; and the prophet Isaiah threatens 'Leviathan the piercing serpent,' with judgments from God: Is. xxvii. 1. Must we suppose that the Psalmist is singing the triumphs of God's victory over a dragon, and that the prophet is foretelling the destruction of a mere serpent? Or shall we resign this literal meaning to the dictates of common sense, the evidence of history, and God's own exposition in the prophet Ezekiel? 'The word of the Lord came unto me saying, Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, —speak and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers:' Ezek. xxix. 1. 2. 3. If it shall be said that the psalms and prophets are of too late a date to determine

the use of language in the time of Moses, the author of the book of Genesis; why then let the author of the book of Genesis speak for himself, and tell us whether by the term 'serpent' he always means a natural serpent. 'Dan (they are the words of Genesis) shall be a serpent in the way, an adder in the path; that biteth the horse's heels, so that his rider shall fall backward:' Gen. xlix. 17. Here is a serpent described by that very character which is urged as determining the serpent of the fall to be a natural serpent. "The very words of the curse," we are told, "imply or foretel a perpetual war between man and that beast of the field the serpent: and that such a war, wherein men by walking with naked feet and heels, as they do in the eastern countries, were very liable to the attacks of serpents, that were very venomous and numerous there."

Let this observation be carried to the forty-ninth chapter of Genesis, and the passage from thence quoted. There you will find a serpent that bites horses by the heels, so that the rider falls backward. What wants there more to prove this a natural serpent? And yet the author of this passage tells us that he meant Dan or the tribe of Dan, by the serpent and the adder; and consequently, by biting of the horse's heels, he did not mean that Dan would in the literal sense bite horses by the heels, but he intended by this metaphorical expression to describe the subtle and mischievous practices of that tribe. There will be occasion to mention this passage again: the use now made of it is only to show that the circumstance of the serpent's bruising the heel of the woman's seed in the history of the fall, does by no means determine the serpent there mentioned to be a mere natural serpent.

But respect, perhaps more than enough, has been paid to this opinion, of which the learned Pirerius has left this censure: *qua nihil profecto dici cogitarive potest incredibilius et absurdius.* In Genes. p. 192.

Let us come then to the true import and meaning of the prophecy, and examine whether any real difficulty lies in the way of a reasonable inquirer.

1. If there be any truth at all in this history, we must necessarily suppose the tempter to be a rational agent; for if reason-

ing will not be allowed to be a certain characteristic of a rational being, there must be an end of all reasoning on the point.

2. If on the foot of natural religion it must be maintained that the Author of all things is a good being, it necessarily follows that the tempter was an evil being; for he acts in direct opposition to the Creator; he charges him with malice and envy towards his creatures; he attempts, and succeeds in his attempt, to draw his subjects into disobedience; and for this no reason can be assigned but the mere pleasure of affronting God and making man miserable.

3. This tempter being mentioned under the name and character of a serpent, there have been various opinions in accounting for this circumstance of the history. Among these the most considerable, as they appear to me, are the two following:

First, that which supposes a real serpent to have appeared, under the management of the evil being, and as his instrument in the fraud.

Secondly, that which supposes the evil being to have transacted the whole himself, (under what form or appearance this opinion pretends not to determine,) and that the term serpent is used metaphorically to denote immediately this wicked being. I will state the reasons of these opinions as clearly as I can.

Both of them have some support from the text, and both have difficulties from the text, which lie in their way; but then it is to be observed that neither the substance of history nor any one conclusion that can be drawn from it, is in the least affected by this difference in opinion as to this circumstance. For it being agreed on both sides that an evil being was the tempter, it signifies little in this respect whether he was only called a serpent, or whether he made use of a serpent as the instrument of his deceit. Let any man try what objections he can raise from one opinion or from the other, against any known conclusion from this history. If he can raise none, it is evident this point of difference does not affect any thing in which religion can be concerned.

If a real serpent was concerned in this case, then the expressions of Moses are literal, and represent historically all that passed visibly. But these literal expressions necessarily lead

us to conceive that another and much higher being than a serpent was concerned: for however literally true these expressions may be of that serpent, yet naturally they cannot be true of any mere serpent. The rod of Moses was a piece of real wood, and it is literally said that this rod divided the Red Sea, and yet it is naturally impossible it should do so; but not more so than that a mere serpent should argue, reason, tempt, and seduce Eve.

If no real serpent was concerned, then the history remains the same, but the language is metaphorical. The same evil being argues, reasons, tempts, and seduces Eve; and being not known among the Jews by any name peculiar to himself, or perhaps being well known by this very name at the time the history was written, he is called the serpent. And it is to be observed that the name Satan, by which this evil being is afterwards known in the Jewish books, was given him in consequence of the enmity he showed to man in this and other temptations; and therefore before the temptation it does not appear that he had a proper name by which the historian could denote him.

Those who are for a literal sense urge that the narration here is historical, and that we ought not to suppose a metaphor to run through the character of a person chiefly concerned; that however this may be admitted in the poetic and prophetic style, yet in the historical it is absurd; that the tempter is not only called a serpent, but he is treated as such: he is said to be wiser than the beasts of the field: he is doomed to eat dust; to creep on his belly; and he is described by a natural property of the serpent, the biting men by the heels.

To which others, otherwise minded, reply, that the tempter had no proper name known to the persons to whom the history is directed; that it was necessary either to omit his story, or to speak of him under a borrowed name; that the historian has intimated the reason why he called him serpent, because the serpent is the most subtle in its kind, and is therefore the most natural emblem of a deceiver; that he has in his account of this deceiver sufficiently declared who he was, it not being possible for a serpent to do what the history ascribes to the tempter; that the punishment of the deceiver being conceived in terms applicable to the serpent, is no more than was

to be expected, since a metaphor once introduced must be pursued; that being necessary in this case which Horace prescribes in another—

> ———Servetur ad mum
> Qualis ab incepto.

—that for the same reason Dan being called a serpent, it follows that he should bite the horses' heels.

They say farther, that those who are for the literal sense, and suppose the serpent to be the instrument of an evil being, have not so easy and natural an account to give of the mention that is made of the serpent's subtlety. For since in their scheme it was the subtlety of the evil one, and not of the serpent, which deceived Eve, to what purpose is the subtlety of the serpent at all mentioned in a case where it had nothing to do? The most stupid creature might have served the same purpose under the same management; and it was quite foreign to the purpose to take any notice of the cunning of the instrument on which nothing depended.

They add farther, that either antecedently to the writing this history, or by a figure introduced on the foundation of this story, it was usual in the Jewish language to describe great and oppressive powers, and particularly the power of the devils, under the figure and image of serpents. Be the case as it will, it affords an evidence how the word serpent was understood in this history by the Jewish church. When our Saviour's disciples told him that 'even the devils were subject to them,' he replies, in language as plain to be understood, (for known figures have an ascertained meaning,) 'I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy:' Luke x. 19.

To this last interpretation it is objected, that it supposes the most plain matter of fact to be fable, or parable, or allegory.

Fable, parable, and allegory, are words thrown out at random and without distinction. Metaphorical representations bear some resemblance to fable and parable, as both owe something to imagination; but in other respects they differ widely. In fables and parables the very subject matter is feigned his-

tory; in metaphors the subject matter may be something real, and the expression only is borrowed from imagination. The feigned matter of a parable or fable may be related without the use of one metaphor; and the feigned language of metaphors, mixed in historical narrations, may be expounded by the rules of grammar and rhetoric, so as to represent a history real in every circumstance. Metaphors and parables are indeed, in the sense of rhetoricians, allegories; and so is every figure of speech, *ubi aliud dicitur aliud intelligitur*. But an allegory, in the language of divines, is quite another thing; it is not τῆς φωνῆς, but τοῦ πράγματος μεταφορὰ, a change not of language, but of the very substance of a narration from one thing to another. Such allegories have no relation to figures of speech, and oftentimes have been introduced where the story, which is the groundwork of the allegory, is told in the simplest terms, without the mixture of a metaphor or any other figure. The works of Cicero abound in metaphors and other figures of rhetoric; will you therefore call the interpreters who give his true sense in plain words allegorisers? Or is there any more of the allegorical spirit to be discovered in expounding the metaphors of the Bible than in expounding the metaphors of Cicero?

As to myself, how doubtfully soever I expressed myself formerly, the more I consider this case, the more inclined I am to think that a real serpent was seen by Eve. Here are three agents concerned, Adam, Eve, and the serpent; the words addressed to Adam and Eve, in pronouncing sentence on them, are not metaphorical; and what reason is there to suppose that in condemning the third the style should change, and sentence be passed on another being with whom Adam or Eve had no intercourse? If neither of them had seen or conversed with a serpent, how could they account for a serpent's being doomed to go on his belly and to eat dust, because some other being had deceived them? Besides, if we can render a reason for calling the tempter serpent, and so far account for the metaphor in the Mosaic history; yet can we suppose that Moses has taken the same liberty with the very words of God and changed the real sentence on the tempter into a metaphorical punishment on a metaphorical person, introduced to represent him? And if Moses has given us the real words of God in pronouncing

sentence on the tempter, there can be but little doubt that the tempter appeared and acted as a serpent; and a judgment passed on the visible agent in this fraud was a judgment on the deceiver himself, whoever he was, and could no otherwise be understood at the time.

As to the language of Scripture, calling evil and wicked men serpents and scorpions, and particularly as to the words of Jacob, representing the tribe of Dan as 'a serpent in the way,' &c. they are so far from proving that there was no real serpent concerned in the fall, that the very reason why they are called serpents is, because the first deceiver was a serpent, and left his name to all deceivers who came after him. For allowing this expression with respect to Dan and others to be metaphorical, yet all metaphors have relation to something real; and a real serpent acting in the first and great deceit, all other deceivers are called serpents as properly as strong men are often styled Sampsons or Goliahs; names that never would have been thought of, had they not been borne by men remarkable for real and extraordinary strength.

Against this interpretation an objection is formed, from the kind of punishment inflicted on the woman and the serpent. The woman's sorrow in conception was to be multiplied, and the serpent was to go on his belly; and these are so far from being admitted to be punishments, that we are told they are necessary consequences of their original make and formation. That women bring forth with pain, and that serpents move on the belly, is known to every body, and so far this state of things answers directly to their respective judgments; and supposing such judgment to have been passed by God, the present state of the woman and the serpent could not possibly be otherwise than they are: so that from the present state of things no possible objection can be raised against the truth or even the probability of the Mosaic history. Where is the difficulty then? Why, it is said that their state was always the same, as well before as after the fall? But how do you know this? Who could inform you of it?

If you argue from a fact of which you have neither knowlege nor information, what support have you? Will you say that God, who created all beings, cannot alter the state or con-

dition of any being in any respect from what it was originally? This is such a limitation on the power of God, as is directly inconsistent with our notions of the divine attributes; and it will be very easy to show, in the particulars of several species of animals, as great deviations from the original course of nature, as these now under consideration are; and why cannot God do that in the whole species, if he sees reason to do it, which he manifestly does in many particular cases? How the original state and formation of the woman and the serpent differed from the present state, or how the change was effected, I neither know nor shall inquire.

When Zacharias, father of John the Baptist, was stricken dumb instantaneously, can you tell what change was made in his organs of speech, or how this alteration was effected? But suppose that the same change had been made universally, would not the world have been speechless? And can you doubt whether the same power could do this in every man's case, which was done in the case of Zacharias? Would not this have been a curse on man, as extensive and as fatal as the curse of the fall was to the woman or to the serpent, and as contrary to what we call the course of nature, and as hard to be accounted for? And if we consider rightly, nature is nothing. All powers are the gift of the Creator, and every being subsists, not by the law and appointment of nature, but by the law and appointment of God, who is master of his own laws and appointments, and can change them whenever he pleases; and nature will follow and obey his command, and ever be what he intends it should be. But to proceed.

That our Saviour understood the Devil to be the tempter, appears plainly from the parable of the tares and his exposition of it. The parable is this: 'The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept his enemy came, and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? From whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, an enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and

gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn:' Matth. xiii. 24. 25. &c.

The householder, you see, being asked whence hath the field tares, gives this short answer, 'An enemy hath done this.' As to the manner and method of doing it he is silent; it was a point in which the servants had no concern.

Our Saviour explains this parable, and applies it to God's government of the world, for the instruction of his disciples, to whom it was given, 'to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.' The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the tares are the children of the wicked one. Here then our Saviour had the great point before him: 'How came evil into the world?' All the answer he gives to it is, the enemy that sowed the tares is the Devil. Could our Lord be ignorant of the history of the fall, and of the first introduction of evil into the world? Or could he forget it when he was accounting for the work of Providence, with respect to the beginning of evil, that every where abounded? He does not indeed enter into the curious questions relating to the origin of evil, but he tells us who first brought it in, the Devil. The Devil, therefore, was that very serpent who tempted Eve, that enemy who sowed those tares which have overspread the world.

When our Lord tells us that the good seed was sown by the Son of man, and that the good seed are the children of the kingdom, and that the tares are the children of the wicked one, can we doubt whether he had in view that part of the prophecy, 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.' As our Lord has expressly told us that the enemy who brought evil into the world was the Devil, he has as clearly, if attended to, told us that the Restorer of righteousness was that very seed promised to the woman who was to bruise the serpent's head. The good seed, he says, was sown by the Son of man. Who is this Son of man? Every man, every son of man is not a sower of good seed; far other-

wise. The Son of man then must denote some particular person, distinguished from all other children of men. Let us see who this must be. Every man is undoubtedly a son of man, and may be so styled; but *the* Son of man emphatically, and distinguished from other sons of men, is a title never applied to any other person but to our Saviour. That it is emphatically and in a peculiar sense applied to him, may be seen in considering what is ascribed to him in the gospel in virtue of this character: 'The Son of man hath power to forgive sins:' Matth. ix. 6. And in the exposition of the parable now before us, we read, 'the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire:' &c. Matth. xiii. 41. 42. 'The Son of man shall sit on the right hand of the power of God:' Luke xxii. 69. And to mention but one place more: 'God hath given him power to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man:' John v. 27.

Can any of these things be affirmed of any other son of man? Can every or any son of man forgive sins, or judge the world? and yet this judgment is committed to him, because he is the Son of man. Considering him then as a man, and yet intitled to be styled emphatically the Son of man, what is there to distinguish him from all other sons of men? If he is indeed that seed promised to the woman, who was to bruise the serpent's head, through whom were to be established all the expectations of mercy and judgment raised by the ancient prophets; we see a plain reason why he is styled the Son of man, being that very Son foretold, on whom the hopes of the world rested from the beginning.

As our Saviour, being the seed of the woman, is styled the Son of man, so the Devil acting (as probably he did) under the form of a serpent, is for the same reason styled the serpent; and wicked spirits and men are styled serpents and scorpions, and are characterised as powers of the enemy. The tempter himself, the great dragon, the old serpent, is called the 'Devil and Satan who deceiveth the whole world:' Rev. xii. 9. You see then that the contest between true religion and idolatry, between righteousness and wickedness, has from the beginning been carried on by the serpent and his seed on one side, and the

Son of man, the seed of the woman, on the other, agreeable to the ancient prophecy given after the fall. As the Devil is called the evil one, so Christ is called the just one. The serpent under the influence of the evil one, and the Son of man, have had perpetual strife to condemn or to save the world.

It has been matter of doubt, as I observed before, whether the tempter appeared to Eve in the form of a serpent or not; but if we consider how great an instrument of idolatry the serpent has been in all times, it will add some weight in favor of their opinion, who think that the Devil made use of the serpent in his first deceit, as he has since undoubtedly done in a thousand others in after times. I need not prove how great an object of idolatry the serpent has been. It is well known what the case was in Egypt, in the eastern country, in Greece and Rome, and elsewhere. This species of idolatry, however it came there, was found in America on the first discovery of that country. Garcilasco del' Viga, who wrote the history of the Incas of Peru, tells us that the Spaniards, forcing into the recess of one of their temples, found there the image of a great dragon, placed as the deity of the temple and the object of religious worship. Other instances in abundance might be produced from modern as well as ancient history.

When you reflect how extensive this kind of idolatry has been, how it has spread over the whole world, you may judge perhaps that the first prophecy has been more literally accomplished than has been generally supposed; and that the old serpent in his old form with his seed, and the Son of man the seed of the woman, have been in perpetual enmity, and will be till the appointed time comes for destroying the power of the evil one.

But to return to the history of the fall. In opposition to what I said with regard to the hopes given to Adam and his posterity by the sentence on the serpent, it has been said that there is not the least intimation of any victory of man over the serpent. Now if no intimation of advantage be given to man over the serpent in the literal sense, there is no ground to infer by analogy any advantage to the man over the evil being, the tempter and seducer. Let us then consider this. Naturalists are agreed that the head of a serpent is the tenderest part, and

that wounds there, if they are such as bruise or break the head, are incurable. On this ground the Scripture, elsewhere representing great and evil powers under the image of dragons and serpents, relates or foretels their certain ruin by the same figure of bruising or breaking their heads. Thus the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, is described in these terms: 'thou breakest the heads of the dragons in the waters:' Psalm lxxiv. 13. A man wounded in the heel by a serpent may or may not die; for nature has provided, and experience has found out, so many remedies for this evil, that few so wounded perish, and those for want of care and proper application. True it is that serpents, as long as they are serpents, will bite men by the heels, and men will return the evil on their heads: here is then a perpetual enmity declared, but with unequal success; on one side pains and wounds, on the other death and destruction. Thus it is between men and the serpents of the earth; and I am at a loss to account for the assertion, that here is not the least intimation of any final victory of the man over the serpent. Take this out of the metaphor, and apply it to the evil being, the tempter and betrayer of our first parents, and thus much at least appears to be intended: that man, though greatly injured, and greatly to be injured by the seducer's poisonous insinuations, shall at the last prevail and destroy the power and tyranny of the wicked spirit. Man shall suffer in the contest, but for him there are remedies prepared. The evil one shall receive a wound, a wound that knows no cure.

This exposition will not necessarily lead us farther, nor show us all the circumstances of this contest, nor the certain means of victory; but a little reflexion will open the view: and since all was lost by disobedience to God, surely it is no far-fetched consequence to infer that nothing can be regained but through his favor; unless there be one more mighty than he to rescue us out of his hands. Is it then reconcilable to the notion of God to suppose that sinners can recover his favor by any other means than those of righteousness and obedience? If not, then the chain of consequences deduced in the former part of this treatise must hold firm; and there is no way to break through it but by supposing the history of the fall to be

a mere fiction of antiquity, which was introduced by a strength of imagination in some early age, and through a weakness of judgment has been believed and admitted in those which followed.

It is a material inquiry, and connected to the history of the fall, and affecting no less a matter than the foundation of all religion, to know on what ground we have hope towards God.

That hope towards God is a necessary foundation of religion, without which it cannot subsist, seems to be a thing agreed.

The question then is, whence these hopes are derived? From revelation and the promises of God, say I; from natural reason contemplating the attributes of God, say others, who are of opinion that the attributes of God are a sufficient foundation, from whence man, poor weak man, may learn to hope for certain mercy from him.

I want not to be convinced that the present condition of mankind affords great arguments for pity and compassion, and consequently good grounds for hope from the mercy of God. Whoever views mankind in their present state, into which they came by no voluntary act of their own, but placed in it by him who is their Maker, and will be their judge; subject to ignorance and superstition by a kind of necessity of birth and education; surrounded with many natural infirmities and passions, arising from no crime of which they are conscious; and at the same time considers the benignity of the divine nature, and the love of God towards his creatures, of which the affection of natural parents is but a faint resemblance, will easily see that the condition of man pleads strongly for mercy, that nature with unutterable groans calls for help and deliverance for her children, and that there is great reason to expect from the goodness of God that he will not be deaf to these cries.

This, I suppose, is meant when we are told that the attributes of God are a just foundation from whence man, poor weak man, may learn to hope for certain mercy from him.

But what is this to the case before us, or to the main question concerning the foundation of religion; which had a beginning before so much as one poor weak man was born into the world to plead the misery of his condition as a motive for mercy? At the time of the fall there were but two in the

world, and they both sinners, without the plea of ignorance or natural infirmity to excuse their iniquity. They had incurred the sentence of immediate death, were conscious that they deserved it, and had reason every moment to expect the execution. Tell me now on what ground they could conceive hope: could they plead the misery of their condition? If so, then every sinner who renders himself miserable by his iniquity has a title to mercy. Could any reasoning of theirs on the attributes of God give a just foundation for hope against the express declaration of God himself, 'in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die?'

Supposing these sinners had died in their sin according to the terms of the law given them, what complaint could have been formed on their behalf? And where then would have been the men, the poor weak men, whose condition affords such certain grounds for hope? None such would have come into the world. That there are such in the world now, is the effect of God's mercy to our first parents; a consequence of that promise which first gave them confidence towards God.

It is one thing to view the world in its present circumstances; another to view it in its original. God would not have suffered the world to have been filled with weak miserable creatures, had he not intended them for objects of his mercy. No wonder therefore if they appear to be what he intended they should be. But Adam and Eve came not into the world in this miserable state, and therefore the original hopes of religion after the fall, which are certainly as old as Adam, owe not their rise to that condition in which he was no sharer.

The not making this distinction between the original hopes of nature, and the hopes which may be derived from the present state of the world, has, I am persuaded, been a great prejudice in many minds, as well against revealed religion as against those who defend it. Divines are thought to have no sense or no bowels, when they call in question the foundation of those hopes which natural reason conceives from a view of the perfections of God and the imperfections of man. Revelation is looked on as an imposition and abridgment of our natural right, when it offers that mercy on terms and condi-

tions to which nature seems to lay so just a claim on her own account.

Yet neither does the gospel, nor they that defend it, pretend to say that man in his present condition is not an object of mercy. So far from it, that they assert that God permitted men to come into this condition that they might be objects of his mercy, and for the clear manifestation of his goodness.

There is one difficulty which attends on every scheme of natural religion, of which I think every considering man, who follows his inquiries up to the original of things, must be sensible. The case is this: the religion and morality which nature teaches, is such as nature in the present weak condition cannot perform. Reason teaches us what is right; but alas! it wants no proof to show that the best of us fall short of this perfection. Whence comes this inconsistency, this contradiction in nature? Why had we not less discernment to see what is right, or more power to follow the dictates of reason? To mend this matter, the mercy of God is called in to the assistance of man's weakness; and in good truth there is reason enough for it; this help is not asked before it is wanted. But as the application to mercy is in every case an after-game, and the very call for mercy and pardon shows the original duty and obligation to have been transgressed; this application to mercy, however in our present circumstances reasonable and necessary, can be no part of the original religion of nature, unless we are naturally and originally formed offenders. No subject wants the prince's mercy till he has broken his laws; and to suppose a government in which every subject should originally stand in need of the prince's mercy, is a contradiction; for the very supposition makes every subject an offender, and the supposing him an offender infers a law antecedent to this supposed original state.

The necessity therefore which every man sees of supporting religion in the present circumstances of the world, by the hopes of God's mercy and pardon, is the voice of nature concurring with the sacred history, to show us that we are fallen from the state in which God first placed us. For nothing perfect *in suo genere* is an object of pity and compassion; and if the whole race of men, taken collectively, are in their present circum-

stances, as every scheme of religion asserts they are, an object of divine compassion, they must be considered as imperfect *in suo genere*, and consequently not in that state in which God created them, who made nothing in its kind imperfect. The view of the world in its present circumstances, surrounded with ignorance, folly, wickedness, and misery; and the necessity of grounding the hopes of all religion on the mercy of God, leads us plainly to the preacher's conclusion, 'Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions:' Eccles. vii. 29.

Far am I then from thinking that weak man is not an object of mercy, or that there is not mercy in store for him. I see too much, nay I feel too much of the infirmities of nature, to read so ill a lesson against myself. But where were all those pleas when Adam sinned? He was no poor weak man, but created upright, and made poor and weak by his own choice. From what principle of reason could he certainly conclude that God would not execute the sentence of death on him immediately? All that we read of him is, that, conscious of his guilt, 'he hid himself from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden,' hoping (as there is nothing more irrational than fear) to escape the all-seeing eye of his Maker. In this state, what comfort could he have but from the promise of God? And indeed were it not for a just expectation from the promises of God, that all the miseries and confusions in the world shall finally end to the glory of God, and the good of those who continue with patience in well-doing, it had been far greater mercy to have put an end to two wretched lives, than to continue them for the propagation of wickedness and misery to a thousand generations. Through mercy then, and for the sake of showing mercy, does the present world subsist; and the origin of this mercy must be traced from an higher principle than the present weakness and misery of human nature. I have said, "It was necessary to convey hope to Adam to be the foundation of religion, and that hope was conveyed when sentence was passed on the offenders." I am answered, No; the necessity of revealing hopes of mercy is plainly not complied with; and no hopes of mercy, or even color for such hopes, are contained in this transaction.

For these assertions no reasons are given but what are found in a mere literal interpretation of the history which has been already considered; and it seems to me that it does not on that scheme do justice to the text; for it makes no difference between a bruise on the heel and a bruise on the head. But this also has been considered.

It may seem strange perhaps to some that we should imagine any blessing at all to be contained in this proceeding, which is plainly a judicial proceeding against offenders, and where nothing but their punishment is to be expected; stranger still that we should search for this blessing on the man, not in the part in which he himself was principally concerned, but in the part which was directed to the serpent, and contains God's curse against him for his deceit. A severe sentence against one offender is seldom intended to be a pardon to another; and to this difficulty the interpretation is subject, which draws the blessing on man from the curse on the serpent.

To clear this, let it be considered,

1. Though a sentence formed on the rigor of the law contains no mercy, yet every sentence which exacts less than the law demands, is to some degree an act of grace. A sentence of fine and imprisonment against a man guilty of death, though it be directly a judicial proceeding against an offender, and in itself a sentence of punishment, yet is it virtually a pardon for life. There have been instances (perhaps too many) where a verdict against a criminal for manslaughter has been in effect a pardon for murder.

Now in the principal case the law was, 'In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' By the sentence on Adam his death was respited, and he was to live to eat (though to eat in sorrow) of the fruits of the ground. By the sentence on Eve, she was to live to bring forth children, though the sorrows of conception were multiplied. By the sentence on the serpent, a perpetual enmity was declared between his and the woman's seed, and the event on each side foretold: 'It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.'

Could Adam, comparing his present case on the foot of these sentences with the penalty of the law against which

he had offended, possibly doubt whether God had dealt graciously with him? No more surely than a criminal doomed to live in imprisonment, when he might have been hanged by the law, can doubt of his prince's goodness to him.

2. As to our supposing a blessing on the man to be contained in the curse on the serpent, this is to be said: that the passage we refer to has undeniably a relation both to the woman and the serpent, and might have been declared (for aught that appears from the subject-matter) as well to one as the other. Now had it been said to the woman, instead of the serpent, 'I will put enmity,' &c. 'It shall bruise thy heel, and thou shalt bruise his head,' there had been no ground for this objection; and I cannot conceive that the words carry any other sense by being spoken to the serpent, than they would have had, supposing them to have been spoken to the woman.

There is a like instance in the sentence on the woman. It is the prerogative of the man that he is head of the woman; but this superiority is not conveyed to him by express grant or concession, but the subjection is laid on the woman as a penalty.

And indeed, whenever a punishment affects a man in the relation he bears to others, the case must ever be as it is here supposed to be. When Canaan was cursed with servitude, in consequence of that curse his brethren became lords over him. When Reuben for his iniquity lost his birthright, the advantage necessarily went to some other of the sons of Jacob. And since the woman and the serpent were declared to be enemies, the destruction of the serpent must necessarily be the exaltation of the woman. And since these words, declaring a perpetual enmity and contest between the woman and the serpent, are made part of the sentence on the serpent, it is a clear indication that the serpent was to suffer most in the struggle, otherwise they could not stand as part of his curse. For the same reason the man's superiority over the woman is left to be collected from the penalty on the woman. A grant of this superiority would have come very improperly in as part of a sentence against the man; but the subjection on the other side came properly as part of the sentence against the woman. Thus

then the case stands: the enmity between the serpent and the woman was a curse on the serpent, and not on the woman, and therefore the advantage of the contest was necessarily to be on the woman's side. So that this circumstance, duly considered, is a great confirmation of the hopes we ground from the curse laid on the serpent.

If we consider that the tempter has no power over man but by drawing him into evil, bruising the heel seems plainly to intimate to us the progress of idolatry and wickedness in the world, which are the engines of the wicked one to keep mankind in subjection, slavery, and misery. And as his chief and main strength consists in these, the bruising his head intimates to us that these shall be destroyed, and the power of the Devil over mankind together with them, by the seed of the woman.

There is another prophecy of ancient date so like to this in language and idea, and to which the hope of salvation has so plain relation, that comparing the two together may perhaps reflect a new light on each. The prophecy intended is to be found in the forty-ninth of Genesis, among the blessings and predictions of Jacob given to his sons just before his death, and relates to the tribe of Dan: 'Dan shall be a servant by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse's heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord!' The difficulty here, at least the main difficulty, is to give any tolerable account of the propriety of this passionate wish for salvation. It has evidently relation to the prophecy concerning Dan, and the exposition ought to show and preserve the relation; and yet according to the common interpretations this passage might as well stand after the blessing of Gad, Asher, Naphthali, or any other of the tribes, as after this prophecy concerning the tribe of Dan. They who refer the salvation here mentioned to the deliverance wrought by Sampson descended from the house of Dan, do also expound the prophecy to relate to him and his victory; so far judging right, that the prophecy and the epiphonema ought to terminate in the same point of view. But how comes Sampson to be thus distinguished? Israel had many other judges and deliverers descended from other tribes, many of them in all respects (bodily strength only excepted) preferable to this strong

Danite; of them there is no notice taken in the prophecy of Jacob, nor of the salvation which God by their means wrought in Israel. Besides, in what sense had Jacob waited for this salvation? and how for this rather than for twenty others of the same kind which happened to his posterity? The words plainly imply him to speak of something which had been long the object of his heart's desire; the thought of which came strong on him when he prophetically beheld the fortune of this tribe. Farther, the images here used of serpent and adder are odious, and very improper to describe a brave or gallant man in any circumstance of life; nor are they, as I remember, ever so used in the sacred writers. It cannot be reasonable therefore to look for the accomplishment of this prophecy among the actions of the tribe of Dan deserving honor and praise; for the ideas by which the prediction is conveyed point out actions of another kind, and lead us to expect, in the history of this tribe, an account of some very dishonorable and perfidious transaction. The history will justify this expectation; for though the house of Israel stands recorded for a wilful and disobedient people, whose heart was not right with their God, yet it is the peculiar infamy of the house of Dan to be the ringleaders in idolatry, the first who erected publicly a molten image in the land of promise, and by their example and perseverance in this iniquity infected all the tribes of Israel. This idolatry began soon after the days of Joshua, and continued until the day of the captivity of the land: Judges xviii. 30. 31.'*

Supposing this to be the view before the prophet's eyes, in what terms more proper could he describe this new tempter and seducer, than by those which were commonly used to describe the first? If the first tempter deserved the name of a serpent, for drawing Adam and Eve from their obedience to the original law, in virtue of which they held the possession of Paradise, did Dan deserve it less for drawing the people of Israel from obedience to the divine law, in virtue of which they had but even then taken possession of the land of promise? If the mischiefs brought on the race of Adam were justly repre-

* Compare with Bishop Usher's Annals.

sented by the serpent's bruising the heel of the woman's seed, did not the mischiefs brought on the house of Israel by the idolatry of Dan, well deserve to be painted in colors of the same kind? And when Jacob saw that the venom of the old serpent was not yet spent, but that it would work again in one of his own sons to the utter ruin of his posterity, could he help looking back on God's promise of deliverance, and the hope given that the serpent's head should be bruised? Could this view, and this reflexion together, be attended with any other sentiments than those which close this prophecy? 'I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord!'

This prophecy, considered in this light, affords a very ancient evidence of the expectation of deliverance from the curse of the fall. The hope of salvation here manifestly relates to the mischief wrought by a serpent biting the heels. And though this image is used to foretel a mischief then to come, and though the salvation itself was still to come, yet the hope was older than Jacob, had been his comfort all along, and was his comfort under the sad prospect he had of his children's iniquity.

Lay these circumstances together, and it is impossible to imagine any salvation that can answer to these ideas, but that only which arose from the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.

This expectation, so earnestly and so warmly expressed by the old patriarch, led some interpreters to apply it to the hopes of salvation through the Messias, as the only object of worth and dignity sufficient to engage his last thoughts, and to be the comfort and support of his last hour; though they did not consider the prophecy itself as leading to this hope, but referred it to a temporal deliverance, to be brought about by one of the sons of Dan.*

But that this prophecy was anciently understood to fix a mark of infamy on Dan, and not to sing the triumph of the tribe, appears by an old tradition grounded on this prophecy, that

* Adest huic expositioni Thargum Hierosolymitanum—Dixit Pater noster Jacob.——'Expecto redemptionem Messiæ filii David, qui venturus est ut adducat sibi filios Israel, cujus redemptionem expectat et desiderat anima mea.' Eademque habentur in paraphrasi Chaldaica editionis Complutensis.—Pererius in loc.

Anti-Christ should proceed from the tribe of Dan.* For which opinion what other ground could there be but this, that the terms in which Dan is described are the very same made use of in describing the tempter, that first and great Anti-Christ who was to have perpetual enmity with the seed of the woman, and to wage continual war with the saints, and often to prevail to the bruising their heel.

Some intimation of this sort seems to be given in the Revelation of St. John, chap. vii. One would think that Dan was rejected and accounted as the seed of the serpent, by the leaving all of this tribe out of the number of those who were sealed with the seal of the living God. It seems to be the original purpose of Providence to settle the house of Israel under twelve heads, and yet Levi had no share of the inheritance in the land of Canaan, as the other tribes had, God having provided another maintenance for him, Numb. xviii. 14. Josh. xiv. 3. and xiii. 33.: nor had Dan, in the Revelation of St. John, any share allotted him in the kingdom of the Messias. In both cases the two tribes of the house of Joseph are admitted to complete the number; so that in the temporal covenant made with Abraham, which gave him the inheritance of the land of Canaan, Levi had no share; in the promise to be accomplished through him in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, Dan had no share. It is remarkable that Jacob in blessing the sons of Joseph adopts them to be his own sons, and constitutes them heads of distinct tribes, Gen. xlviii. 16.; by which means the tribes of Israel should have been thirteen; but as the case happened, this substitution did only keep up the number to twelve. These things did not happen by chance; but I pretend not to account for this disposition of Providence.

That the language of the first prophecy, representing the victory of the woman's seed by bruising the serpent's head, has been continued in later prophecies, has appeared already; hence we read of power given over serpents and scorpions, of treading on the adder, and of trampling the dragon under feet. Now the known use of this language in Scripture, and the application of it to the promised seed, will help us to account

* See Calmet's Dictionary under the title Dan.

for one of the arts made use of by the tempter when he made his trial on our Saviour.

The tempter plainly wanted to know whether Jesus was the Son of God, that person expected to come, and with whom he well knew what concern he had. In order to know this, he tries whether our Lord would own the character by assuming the power belonging to it. 'If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.' The words are taken from the ninety-first psalm, ver. 11. and 12. These words considered in themselves, contain in figurative language a promise of God's providence and care over that person to whom they are addressed, and might be applied with great propriety to David himself, or to any other good person specially regarded by God. How came the tempter then to consider these words as belonging only to him who was to be the Son of God? From the words themselves he could not collect this; but there was another character in the very next verse, and belonging to the same person, which he could not mistake; for this person, over whom the angels were to have charge, was 'to tread on the lion* and adder, and the young lion and the dragon to trample under feet.' He knew by this mark to whom this whole prophecy belonged; he could not forget who was to bruise his head; and though he avoided to ask our Lord directly whether he was that person who was to bruise his head, yet he did the same thing covertly, by trying whether another part of the same prophecy would be owned by him as belonging to himself. If trampling the lion and the adder and the dragon under feet, had meant no more than that the sons of Adam and Eve should now and then destroy the serpents of the field, the tempter would have had no reason to suppose that he, who was to trample on the dragon, was to be the Son of God.

If we look into the world, where sin and death seem to rule with absolute dominion, and appear in all the forms of violence,

* The word translated 'lion' signifies, in the opinion of Bochart, a kind of serpent.

fraud, and iniquity, in distempers without number, and in miseries too many, too affecting to be described; we shall want no other proof of the completion of the first part of the prophecy of the fall. The heel of the seed of the woman has been and will continue to be sufficiently bruised till death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed. On the other side, the children of the kingdom have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, and are training up under the many trials that surround them, by the assistance of God's Holy Spirit, to be heirs of glory and immortality. And the time will come when the Son of man will come forth conquering and to conquer, and shall appear in full power, and in the glory of the Father, to subdue all his enemies. Then shall the dragon, that old serpent which is the Devil and Satan, be fast bound, and cast into the lake of fire and brimstone; and the judgments of God denounced against the wickedness of men having their completion, 'every curse shall cease.'* Then shall the loss of the fall be repaired, paradise be restored, and the tree of life shall yield her fruit again, and the leaves thereof shall be for the healing of the nations.

* Καὶ πᾶν κατανάθεμα οὐκ ἔσται ἔτι. The rendering in our translation is, 'and there shall be no more curse;' as if the words contained an assurance against any new curse. But the true meaning is, that every curse should cease; that the curse of the fall which had been working in all generations, and all others brought on the earth should be utterly extinguished, in consequence of the intire defeat of the old serpent, and the victory of the Son of man.

SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION III.

WHEN Jacob drew near to his end, he called his sons together, and gave to each a peculiar blessing: that relating to Judah. No prophecy in the Old Testament has undergone more interpretation and criticism: the reader is referred for this to Huetius, Le Clerc, and Saurin. Passage in Ecclus. xliv. 19. serves as a key to open to us the nature of the blessings bestowed on the twelve tribes by Jacob: this explained, shows that the several blessings in Gen. xlix. and limited to the several tribes, must be an exposition of the original blessing given to Abraham, and cannot extend beyond the bounds of the first promise: this also probable from the custom in Abraham's family, in which the blessing of the father was regularly conveyed to the son. The adoption of Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, into the inheritance, leaves no room to doubt of this matter. Jacob prefaces his grant to Joseph's family with a recital only of God's promise to make him fruitful, and to give the land of Canaan to him and his seed; for his gift to Joseph's sons went not beyond the terms of this grant. But the blessing of Abraham, derived to his chosen, consisted of two parts, the promise of Canaan, and the promise of that Son in whom *all the nations of the earth were to be blessed.* These two promises went inseparably together from the beginning, and so they continued in some degree to the end. The terms in which these two promises are conveyed to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, and to Judah, laid down in parallel columns. No doubt existed in the ancient Jewish church before Christ, or among the Jews since, but that the promise of the Messiah was

limited to Judah in his blessing; nor is it reasonable to suppose that Jacob, in the division of the blessing, should forget the chief and principal part which had been so solemnly conveyed from Abraham, through Isaac, to himself. The promise of the blessed seed could not be divided; and therefore this part of Jacob's blessing went intire to the tribe of Judah. The promise to Abraham of *multiplying his seed*, and giving them the *land of Canaan for a possession*, implied necessarily a promise of temporal power: all the promises therefore of a numerous issue, strength, and courage, &c. are incident to, and must be referred to this promise; and from this is to be derived a portion of Judah's blessing. The passage in that blessing relating to the sceptre of Judah, accounted for. After the settlement of the twelve tribes in Canaan, each tribe had its princes or heads, who judged its people; consequently every tribe had a sceptre and a lawgiver or judge. It is shown that the government in the several tribes was aristocratical, and that no one tribe had a superiority over another. What authority the princes of tribes had over their own people may be collected from Judges v. 9. 10. Allusion to this made in Matt. xix. 28. From this constitution of the tribes we may infer that Jacob, having settled twelve princes, speaks to them as heads of the people, and that what he says relates to them and their people collectively. We may conclude therefore, that when he speaks to all as princes, and tells Judah in particular that *the sceptre shall not depart from* HIM *until Shiloh come*, the sceptre means that very power and right of government now established in the house of Judah, and in all the other tribes, which Jacob foresaw would depart from them, but would remain with Judah till the coming of Shiloh. The opinion of some interpreters, that the thing promised to Judah is the sceptre; and that the sceptre was not to be settled in Judah's family till some ages after Jacob's death, refuted. Also another, which supposes the sceptre here mentioned to be an emblem of dominion over all the tribes of Jacob.

The same word in the original signifies a tribe and a sceptre, and probably a tribe, because a tribe is a collection of people under the government of one sceptre or authority: instances given to show the relation between the sceptre and the tribe, whence we may understand by the word *sceptre*, the authority in and over a single tribe. True import of the word *lawgiver* known only by reference to the government or constitution intended. The sense must be determined by that of the word sceptre, and signify such lawgivers only as single tribes had within themselves. *From beneath his feet*, that is, either of his own descendants, or a lawgiver of his own to the very last times. Reasons given why *lawgiver*, in this passage, should only signify a judge. With respect to the word Shiloh, nothing need be added to the expositions of the learned; since in all views that have been taken of it, the prophecy must terminate in Christ; and a continuance of the power now settled in the house of Judah is promised till the Messiah come. If we consider the context, it will carry us to the same point: Judah is the only one who received two blessings from his father; viz. the promise of the blessed seed, and a portion in the land of Canaan: this point enlarged on. *Unto him shall the gathering of the people be.* Those who understand this as relating to the Messiah, are shown to have strong reasons on their side; but it seems more consonant to the rules of language to appropriate this character to Judah. According to this latter interpretation it is shown that the prophecy contains the most exact description of the state and polity of Judah during the continuance of his sceptre, after the sceptres were removed from the other tribes, to the last destruction of the nation by the Romans. It is shown how the appointment or constitution of the tribes took its origin from Jacob. From his time to that of the captivity in Babylon, there is no suspicion that the tribe of Judah wanted rulers and princes within itself. The ten tribes of Israel were carried off by Salmaneser about seven hundred years before Christ, and

never appeared again as a people. Here the completion of the prophecy relating to the continuation of Judah's sceptre, after the others were removed, commences. The division of the kingdom prepared the way for this. The seventy years of captivity in Babylon is the only difficulty in the scheme: this obviated. It is shown that the polity of the Jews, as a distinct people, under heads and rulers of their own, was not extinguished by the Asmonean princes; also that things continued in this state to the very death of Christ, from many passages in the gospels. From that time all things began to work towards the destruction of the Jewish polity; they were soon scattered among all nations, and from that day to this have had neither prince nor lawgiver among them; nor will they ever be able to show any signs of the sceptre, till they discover the unknown country, *where never mankind dwelt*. This interpretation of Jacob's prophecy is shown to be very much confirmed by one of Moses, where he blesses the tribes: Deut. xxxiii. It may be asked, why did not Jacob, like Moses, foretel also the continuance of the sceptre of Benjamin, since that tribe ran the same fortune with Judah? Two things stated in answer to and explanation of this. Conclusion, intimating that the interpretation of Jacob's prophecy now advanced, is not wholly the writer's own; being, as to the main point, the fourth of Huetius, which he rejected, as well as that which Junius, Tremellius, and Ainsworth espoused; and which was revised by Ioncourt.

DISSERTATION III.

THE BLESSING OF JUDAH, GEN. XLIX.

WHEN Jacob drew near his end, he called his sons together and blessed them, 'every one according to his blessing,'* *benedictionibus suis propriis*;† that is, giving to each a peculiar blessing. The part relating to Judah stands thus:

Ver. 8. Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee.

Ver. 9. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?

Ver. 10. The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be:

Ver. 11. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes.

There is no prophecy in the Old Testament that has undergone so many interpretations and critical disquisitions as this now before us. It would make a volume to report exactly the various sentiments of learned men on this subject. They who desire to be acquainted with them, may consult Huetius,‡ Mr. Le Clerc,‖ and Mr. Saurin.§

It may be thought perhaps great presumption to attempt any thing on this passage after so much pains bestowed on it by men of great figure in learning; but as I have no intention to make

* Gen. xlix. 28. † Vulg.

‡ Demonstratio Evangelica, cap. iv. prop. 9.

‖ Comment. in locum.

§ Discours Historiques, &c. Disc. 41.

show of much learning or much reading, but only to offer a plain natural sense of the most important passage in this prophecy, which seems to me to arise from the very state and circumstances of things at the time this prophecy was delivered, I hope it will not be thought the effect of vanity or ostentation.

There is a passage in the book Ecclesiasticus which will serve as a key to open to us the nature of the blessings bestowed on the twelve tribes by their father Jacob. This author, the Son of Sirach, observes that God gave this covenant to 'Abraham, established it with Isaac, and made it rest on the head of Jacob.'* Thus far the intire blessing, and all the parts of it, vested in single persons only; but in the next step there is an alteration; for God 'divided Jacob's portions, among the twelve tribes did he part them.'† There is no question but that this passage relates to the settlement and the blessing of the tribes by Jacob in the 48th and 49th of Genesis; and it shows us that the several blessings given to the several tribes are but parts or portions of the blessings which Jacob received from Isaac; Isaac from Abraham; and Abraham immediately from God. In this view then the several blessings mentioned in the 49th of Genesis, and limited to the several tribes, must be considered as an exposition of the original blessing given to Abraham; and the blessing from which the others are derived, must limit and determine the sense of the particulars; which cannot be extended beyond the bounds of the first promise.

Setting aside the authority of the Son of Sirach, it is reasonable to think that this was the case, from the custom and practice in Abraham's family, in which the blessing of the father was regularly conveyed to the son. And when we see Jacob blessing all his children, what can we suppose else but that he is transmitting to his posterity the blessing which he himself received? If we look to the beginning of the 48th of Genesis, where Jacob adopts Ephraim and Manasseh, the two sons of Joseph, and constitutes them heads of tribes in his family, and consequently intitles them to a share among his own sons of the land of Canaan, there will be no room to doubt of this matter.

* Ecclus xliv. 19. &c. † Ver. 23.

For Jacob founds his right of allotting the land of Canaan, in the manner he does, on God's grant of that land to himself. 'Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people, and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession. And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine: as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine:' ver. 3. 4. 5.

Jacob prefaces his grant to Joseph's family with a recital only of God's promise to make him fruitful, and to give the land of Canaan to him and his seed; for his gift to Joseph's family went not beyond the terms of this grant.

But the blessing of Abraham derived to his chosen, consisted of two parts; the promise of the land of Canaan, and the promise of that Son in whom 'all the nations of the earth were to be blessed.' These two promises went inseparably together from the beginning, and we shall find they continued in some degree to do so to the end.

Let us see now in what terms these two promises are conveyed.

The land of Canaan to Abraham.	*The blessed seed to Abraham.*
The Lord appeared unto Abraham, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: Gen. xii. 7.	Thou shalt be a blessing, and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed: Gen. xii. 2. 3.
Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give	Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation; and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him: Gen. xviii. 18.

it, and to thy seed for ever; and I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: Gen. xiii. 14, &c.

To Isaac.

Unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries,—and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven: Gen. xxvi. 3. 4.

To Isaac.

And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: Gen. xxvi. 4.

To Jacob.

God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: Gen. xxvii. 28.

With corn and wine have I sustained him: Gen. xxvii. 37.

The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: Gen. xxviii. 13. 14.

To Jacob.

The elder shall serve the younger: Gen. xxv. 23.

Let the people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: Be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's son bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee: Gen. xxvii. 29.

Behold I have made him thy Lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants: Gen. xxvii. 37.

In thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: Gen. xxviii. 14.

To the tribe of Judah.	*To the tribe of Judah.*
Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be, binding his foal unto the vine: &c. Gen. xlix. 9. 10. 11.	Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies: thy father's children shall bow down before thee: Gen. xlix. 8. Until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be: Gen. xlix. 10.

If the words which I have here placed as the conveyance of the promise of the blessed seed to the tribe of Judah, be not admitted in that sense, there are no others relating to this or any of the other tribes, which make any mention, much less any settlement, of this part of Jacob's blessing. And yet there never was any doubt, either in the ancient Jewish church before Christ, or among the Jews since the time of Christ, but that the promise of the Messiah was limited to the tribe of Judah in this blessing; nor is it reasonable to imagine that Jacob, in dividing his blessing among his posterity, should forget the chief and principal part, which had been with so much solemnity conveyed from Abraham, through Isaac, to himself. Besides, the expression here used, 'Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise,' is equivalent to what was said to Abraham, 'Thou shalt be a blessing;' and to what was said to Jacob, 'Blessed be he that blesseth thee;' and must consequently mean the same thing. But of this part I have already treated in the foregoing discourses, and will not burden the reader and myself with repetitions.

The promise of the blessed seed could not be divided, for a man can descend but from one tribe; a son can be born but of one father; and therefore this part of Jacob's blessing went

intire to the tribe of Judah. All the other tribes have their special blessing assigned them out of the promised land; and interpreters need not be concerned, as some of them are, to find wherein the peculiar blessing of some of the sons of Jacob, to whom or of whom very little is said, does consist; for the making them heads of tribes conveyed to them a right to share in the land of Canaan, and in that their blessing consisted, and by that they received a portion of the blessing of their father.

The promise to Abraham of 'multiplying his seed,' and giving them the land of Canaan for a possession, implied necessarily a promise of temporal power and dominion. For a people cannot possess a land without some form or rule of government among them. All the promises therefore of a numerous issue, of strength and courage in subduing enemies, and the like, are incident to the promise of the land of Canaan, and must be referred to it. Thus when we hear the character of Judah: 'Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down and couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him?' to what else can we apply these images of courage and bravery but to the martial disposition of the tribe of Judah, and to their victories obtained over the ancient possessors of the land of Canaan? In like manner all the promises of plenty are part of the promise which God gave to Abraham and his posterity, of a 'land flowing with milk and honey.' Of Judah it is said, 'Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.' This is a portion of Jacob's blessing; and can it naturally be deduced from any part of the blessing bestowed on him by his father, but this only? 'God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:' Gen. xxvii. 28.

There remains still to be accounted for, the passage relating to the sceptre of Judah:

'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.'

The promise to Abraham was, that he should be the 'father of many nations:' Gen. xvii. 5. and of Sarah it is said, 'she shall be a mother of nations, kings of people shall be of her:' Gen. xvii. 16. To Jacob it is said, 'God multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people:' Gen. xxviii. 3. The succession in the house of Abraham was preserved in single persons till Jacob's time; he is the first who had a numerous issue, and all of them intitled to the promises made to their forefathers. The sons of Jacob lived with him, as children of his family only, till his going into Egypt; for when the account is given of their removal to Egypt, they are reckoned not as heads of tribes, but as so many persons only, belonging to the family of Jacob: 'all the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six:' Gen. xlvi. 26. to which Jacob and Joseph, and his two sons born in Egypt, being added, it is said, 'all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten:' verse 27. Hitherto there is no mention of any tribe, or of any house, but the house of Jacob. This state of things continued during the seventeen years of Jacob's life in Egypt, in all which time there is no appearance of any power or authority in any rulers, or elders, or heads of tribes, but in Jacob only. And how should there, before any tribes were appointed, or any form of government was settled? When Jacob drew near his end, he summoned all his family, in order to appoint the form of government which should take place after his death, and continue as long as his posterity held possession of the land of Canaan. The forty-ninth chapter of Genesis is commonly called, 'Jacob's blessing of his sons;' but it might as well be called, Jacob's appointment of twelve rulers or princes to govern the house of Israel. For tell me, how came this form of government, by a distribution of the people into twelve tribes, with heads and rulers over them, to be pitched on rather than any other? There is no designation of this form of government in any other place of Scripture, and it could not be settled tacitly by a mere devolution of Jacob's power among his sons after his decease; for had that been the case, Ephraim and Manasseh could not have been heads of tribes, for their father Joseph was living, and he

must have been head of one tribe, as the rest of his brethren were. Nor is it to be imagined that so considerable a part of the story as the founding and settling the government of Israel, should be passed over by Moses in silence, and his reader left to supply by imagination so material a part of the history. It must therefore be allowed that the government of Israel is settled by Jacob in the forty-eighth and forty-ninth of Genesis.

All the circumstances reported in these two chapters answer to this idea. In the first place Jacob gives the birthright, as to the temporal inheritance, to Joseph, by giving him a double portion, and raising out of his family two princes or heads of tribes in Israel: 'Ephraim and Manasseh are mine: as Reuben and Simeon they shall be mine:' Gen. xlviii. 5. And because other issue from Joseph would have stood on a level in point of descent with Ephraim and Manasseh, and it might have been doubtful whether they might not claim to be rulers themselves, and equal to their brothers, Jacob directs that they should be reckoned in the tribes of their two brothers, 'they shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance:' verse 6. By this designation of Jacob, the two sons of Joseph were appointed, each to be the head of a separate people; for this Jacob, speaking of these two grandchildren, declares, 'he, Manasseh, shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but his brother Ephraim shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations:' verse 19. In the following chapter Jacob speaks to his sons as the representatives of so many distinct people; which is expressly remarked by Moses, 'all these are the twelve tribes of Israel:' Gen. xlix. 28. and it is evident likewise from hence, that the things foretold and ascribed to them are by no means capable of being understood of single persons. Here the promise to Abraham, 'that he should be father of many nations;' and to Sarah, 'that kings of people should be of her,' began to take effect; for from this time forward the people of Israel are reckoned by their tribes, which were so many distinct people, or (in the language of the book of Genesis) nations, independent of each other, and subsisting under rulers and judges of their own, but confederated for mutual defence, and the maintenance of one law to be given equally to all. It ought to be no wonder to hear the tribes of

Israel called nations, and their heads princes; for the same language is used of Ishmael's twelve sons: 'these are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations:' Gen. xxv. 16. These princes could be no more than heads of tribes;* and such princes likewise were the dukes and the kings of Edom.† Ishmael was the son of Abraham, and Esau was son of Isaac; and their families could not be much more numerous than Jacob's, and yet they are reckoned according to their princes and their dukes, and by their several nations. In truth, all the governments of the east seem at this time to have been of this sort. What were the four kings, think you, whom Abraham overthrew with three hundred and eighteen of his own servants, and the assistance of his three friends, who might perhaps make as many more? What were the thirty-two kings, whose country was divided among the twelve tribes? The princes of the tribes of Israel were surely equal in power and dignity to such kings; and such were the kings of those days. This observation will teach us to restrain and limit our ideas within due bounds, when we read of kings, and princes, and sceptres, and judges, and nations, in these early times; and not to imagine, because the words are the same which we now use, that they must necessarily signify as high degrees of power as now they do.

What kind of power Jacob settled on these heads of tribes, may appear from what he himself says of Dan; 'Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel:' Gen. xlix. 16. All the people of Israel were not Dan's people, and therefore it is absurd to imagine any power given to Dan or any of his descendants over the whole house of Jacob. Besides, nothing peculiar is given to Dan in this grant; he was to judge his own people indeed: but how? Why, 'as one of the tribes of Israel.'‡ From whence it is evident that every tribe had its own princes and judges; and that every prince or head of a

* Vide Clericum in locum.

† Gen. xxxvi. Vide Clericum ad versum decimum quintum.

‡ Quia penes ejus sobolem in communi politia pars gubernationis et imperii erit, ut tribus ista caput unum efficiat.—Vatablus in locum.

tribe judged his own people; consequently every tribe had a sceptre and a lawgiver as well as the tribe of Judah.

That this power in the heads of tribes took place immediately on the death of Jacob, may be collected from hence, that from this time all applications and messages are not to the people, but to the elders of Israel: Exod. iii. 16. xii. 21. The command of God sent to the house of Jacob and the children of Israel in Egypt, was delivered by Moses to the elders of the people: Exod. xix. 3. 7. The people and their rulers are distinguished plainly in Exod. xxxiv. 31. 32. 'Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him, and Moses talked with them. And afterwards all the children of Israel came nigh.'

The government in the several tribes of Israel was not monarchical, but aristocratical, as appears by comparing these passages, Exod. vi. 14. Numb. xxxiv. 18. Josh. xxii. 14.; and that no one tribe had a superiority over another is plain on the death of Joshua; for then the people inquire of God, who should 'go up for them against the Canaanites?' Judges i. 1. —a question that would not have been asked had any one tribe, or ruler of one tribe, had the right of leading and governing the rest. When the children of Benjamin were guilty in the matter of the Levite's concubine, no one tribe or ruler of one tribe pretends to call them to account for it; but all the tribes of Israel jointly send to expostulate with them, and to demand justice; and on refusal of justice, recourse is had to arms immediately. What authority the princes of tribes had among their own people, may be collected from the song of Deborah, where they are described 'as governors in Israel, riding on white asses, and sitting in judgment:' Judges v. 9. 10. And it is with allusion to this form of government that our Saviour promises his disciples that they 'shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel:' Matth. xix. 28.

Having now seen the constitution of the tribes of Israel, and the powers and authorities incident to a tribe, as such, we may look back to the prophecy, and try whether this light will direct us in the exposition of it. Jacob having settled twelve princes or rulers of people in his house, summons them together to hear what 'should befal them in the last days:' he

speaks to them as heads of people, and not as single persons, and what he says relates to them and their people collectively, and not to them personally. Since then he speaks to all as princes, and tells Judah in particular that the sceptre should not depart from him until Shiloh came, what can we understand by the sceptre in this place, but that very power and right of government now settled and established in the house of Judah, and in all the other tribes, and which Jacob foresaw would depart from the other tribes long before the coming of Shiloh, but would remain with Judah until Shiloh came? The promise to Judah that his sceptre should not depart, amounts to a declaration that the sceptres of the other tribes should depart, and plainly shows that the sceptre was not a thing peculiar to Judah; for the promise here to Judah is not that he should have a sceptre, which none of his brethren had or were to have; but that his sceptre should continue longer with him than his brothers' sceptres should continue with them.

Most of the interpreters whom I have consulted take it for granted, and it is the common notion, that the thing here promised to Judah is the sceptre; and that the sceptre was not to be settled in Judah's family till some ages after the death of Jacob: which last observation is grounded on Jacob's words, 'that I may tell you that which shall befal you in the last days.' But the first of these observations has no ground in the text; nay, rather, is absolutely inconsistent with it. The ancient versions all agree in one sense, the same which our English version has expressed, 'the sceptre shall not depart from Judah.' Do not these words suppose the sceptre to be already in the hand of Judah? Is there any sense in saying that a thing shall not depart which never yet was in possession? The prophecy is not a grant of the sceptre, but a confirmation of it; now a confirmation of nothing is nothing, and to make it something, the possession of the thing confirmed must be supposed. I know not by what rules of language or grammar these words can be construed into a grant of the sceptre; and though so many writers and interpreters have followed this sense, yet I do not remember to have seen one passage or parallel expression from the scripture, or any other author, produced to justify

the interpretation. Yet surely it is no usual way of speaking, to say, your sceptre shall not depart, when the speech is directed to one who has no sceptre, nor is to have one for many ages.

The second observation, when rightly applied, is right; and if the continuance of the sceptre of Judah be, as I suppose, the thing foretold, it extends to the very last days of the Jewish state; and in this respect the interpretation is justified.

Another thing supposed by most interpreters is, that the sceptre here mentioned is an emblem of dominion over all the tribes of Jacob. But how can that be? Had not Jacob settled a sceptre in every tribe? as is evident, ver. 16. 'Dan shall judge his people as one of the sceptres* of Israel.' Suppose a father had divided his estate among twelve sons, and should say of one of them, the estate shall not depart from John for many ages; could you possibly suppose him to mean more than the share of the estate given to John? Could you understand him to mean that all the estate, the twelve shares, should come to John and continue in his family? The case is the same here: twelve princes are created; of one of them Jacob says, 'the sceptre shall not depart from him until Shiloh come.' Is it not plain then that the sceptres are distinguished here, and that it is foretold of one that it shall long outlast the rest? The words therefore, 'the sceptre shall not depart from Judah,' are equivalent to these, 'Judah's sceptre shall not depart;' and this sense is justified by the original, the Seventy, the Vulgate, and the Chaldee paraphrast.† It must be remembered that Judah does not in Genesis xlix. mean, what in aftertimes it came to mean, the whole people of the Jews; but it means distinctly the tribe of Judah only, and the words now under consideration can possibly import no more than this, 'the sceptre shall not be taken from the tribe of Judah:' consequently the sceptre here is an emblem of authority in and over a tribe only; and can by no means, in these circumstances, be made to signify or denote an authority over all the tribes of Israel.

* The original word is *schevet*, the same which is rendered *sceptre* in the prophecy relating to Judah.

† Non auferetur principatum habens à domo Judæ: C. P. 'The ruler shall not be taken away from the house of Judah.'

The same word in the original (*schevet*) signifies a tribe and a sceptre; and probably a tribe, because a tribe is a collection of people under the government of one sceptre or authority.* Others, I know, account otherwise for this signification.† But the Seventy interpreters would never have used the Greek word σκῆπτρον to denote a tribe, had they not thought that the original word was used to signify a tribe, on the notion of its being a body under one and the same government. When the people were assembled for the choice of a king, Samuel says to them, 'Present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes:' 1 Sam. x. 19. κατὰ τὰ σκῆπτρα ὑμῶν, (LXX.) 'and the tribe of Benjamin was taken:' ibid. verse 20. καὶ κατακληροῦται σκῆπτρον Βενιαμείν, (LXX.) When God threatens Solomon to divide his kingdom, he adds, 'but I will give one tribe to thy son:' 1 Kings xi. 13. σκῆπτρον ἓν δώσω τῷ υἱῷ σοῦ, (LXX.) Many other instances there are; but these are sufficient to show the relation between the sceptre and the tribe, and that it is conformable to the language and usage of Scripture to understand by the word sceptre, the authority in and over a single tribe.

What the true import of the word lawgiver is in this place, cannot be determined but by reference to the government or constitution intended. When we know the form of government, we can easily determine what lawgiver signifies; but we cannot from the word lawgiver determine the form of government intended. The reason is, because there are as many kinds of lawgivers as there are forms of government in the world. The sense of the word lawgiver in this place must necessarily therefore be governed by the sense of the word sceptre. If sceptre signifies here the authority and power over

* Traductum vero nomen est ad significandum tribum—quod unaquæque tribus suam peculiarem virgam haberet, nomine suo inscriptam, quam tribuum principes—manu gestare consueverant—Cum Dominus Aaronem his verbis alloquitur; 'sed et fratres tuos de tribu Levi, et sceptrum patris tui sume tecum;' intellige sceptrum ipsum, et totam tribum, quæ sceptro significabatur, et regebatur. —Menochius de Rep. Heb. lib. i. cap. iv.

† *Schevet;* tribus quod ex arbore seu stirpe nata sit, h. e. e patre. —Kircherus, Concord. in voce.

a tribe only, the word lawgiver joined with it must necessarily be confined to mean such lawgivers only as single tribes had within themselves. Consequently, what has been said to fix the meaning of the word sceptre, serves equally to fix the sense of lawgiver. The Seventy interpreters have rendered the word *schevet* by ἄρχων, and Mechokek by ἡγούμενος.* Mr Ioncourt suspects that they were led by a kind of national pride and vanity to make choice of these terms, that carry in them such grand ideas of royal and princely power; but before the passing of this censure he ought to have examined whether the Seventy do constantly or usually employ these terms to signify so much power as he supposes. Ἄρχοντες and ἄρχων are used by the Seventy above a hundred times at least to signify the head or heads of the tribes of Israel. There are twelve instances of this use of the word in the second chapter of the book of Numbers, and about sixteen in another, Numb. iv. The instances indeed are so many, that it is quite needless to produce any: the Concordance will furnish authorities to every inquirer. The case is the same as to the word ἡγούμενος. In 2 Chron. v. 2. we meet with both these words together in the same sense. 'Solomon assembled all the elders of Israel,' καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἄρχοντας τῶν φυλῶν, τοὺς ἡγουμένους πατριῶν τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ. So again, 1 Chron. vii. 40. 'All these were the children of Asher,' ἄρχοντες οἴκου πατριῶν—ἡγούμενοι τῶν ἀρχόντων τῶν γενεαλογηθέντων ἐν τῇ στάσει τοῦ πολέμου. Thus the sons of Esau, who were no other than heads of tribes, are called ἡγεμόνες: Gen. xxxvi. and the sons of Ishmael, who were princes of the same sort, are styled, Gen. xxv. ἄρχοντες. What reason is there now to suspect the Seventy of vanity, prejudice, or artifice; or to suppose that they mean any higher degree of power by the words in this place, than they do in many other places where they make use of them?

'A lawgiver from between his feet.' There is no interpreta-

* Prevenus de toute la pompe de la superiorité et des grandeurs dont je viens de parler, ils ont cru que *schevet*, qui signifie communement verge, doit être en cet endroit une verge de commandement; c'est pourquoi entrainez de ce beau côté ils ont traduit hardiment 'le prince ne sera point oté à Juda.'—Lettres Critiques, p. 163.

tion of these words but what suits with the exposition of the prophecy now proposed; and therefore I may refer myself in this to the reader's choice among the several interpretations given of this phrase. The words may be construed two ways; for we may either read thus, 'a lawgiver from between his feet shall not depart from Judah;' or thus, 'a lawgiver shall not depart from between the feet of Judah.' In the first way of reading the meaning probably is, that the lawgiver of Judah should be of his own descendants; and so they were. In the second reading the meaning is, that the tribe of Judah should have a lawgiver of their own to the very last times. This is Wagenseil's* sense of the words; and it is the sense of Onkelos.

But suppose the original word to be rightly rendered in this place lawgiver, it will afford a strong objection against any interpretation which extends the powers here mentioned over all the people of Israel. For the tribe of Judah never had a legislative authority over all the tribes; no, not even in the days of David and Solomon. When the people desired a king, they expressed their meaning very clearly, to have a 'judge, and one to go out before them to fight their battles:' 1 Sam. viii. 20. And when Samuel rehearses to them the manner of their king, there is no appearance that he was to be a lawgiver. And Moses, who was the only lawgiver of the people of Israel, had excluded all kings from this power. 'They were to have a copy of the law,' and not to turn 'aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left:' Deut. xvii. 18. &c. And the ordinances made by David, relating to the service of the temple, were established by authority and consent of the princes and rulers of tribes: Ezra viii. 20. So little appearance is there that Judah was ever lawgiver to all the tribes of Jacob. Nor indeed could this power in a proper sense belong to single tribes; for though they might and did make such rules as we commonly call by-laws, yet the law of Moses was their unalterable law, both for civil and ecclesiastical affairs. And therefore I rather choose to understand judge (for so the word in the original may be understood) than law-

* Carminis Lipmanni confutatio, p. 293.

giver in this place; and this agrees best to the passage referred to before, 'Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel.'

As to the word Shiloh, I have nothing to add to the expositions of the learned. They who are desirous to see the several ways of accounting for the signification of this word, may consult the authors referred to by Wagenseil,* Le Clerc,† and Saurin.‡ If by this word we understand *pacificus*, the peacemaker, or restorer of peace, whom can it design but him in whose time there was to be abundance of peace, and righteousness for evermore? If we understand by it *mittendus*, the person to be sent, who can that be but the same of whom so many promises and prophecies had been given; even the blessed seed? If we choose rather to interpret *filius ejus*, his Son; who is this pecular Son of Judah but the blessed seed, the promise of which was settled on Judah? If we take the version of the Seventy for our guide, and render the word with them, τὰ ἀποκείμενα αὐτῷ, or ᾧ ἀπόκειται, the same person still is pointed out; the blessed seed was the great treasure in reserve for Judah; the blessed seed was he for whom all things were reserved, whose the kingdom was to be. If, lastly, we follow Mr. Le Clerc, and render the word *finis* (the end), what end can be intended but the end of the settlement and establishment made by Jacob at this time; or in other words, the end of God's present covenant, in virtue of which the division of the land of Canaan was made among the twelve tribes of Jacob, and which was to be succeeded by the covenant of better hopes? In all views the prophecy must terminate in Christ; and a continuance of the power now settled in the house of Judah is promised till the Messiah comes. This agrees with the sense of all ancient expositors, both Jews and Christians, as may be seen in the authors already mentioned.

All these expositions depend on the interpretation of the word Shiloh; and if we consider the context, it will carry us to the same point. Judah is the only one who received two blessings from his father, viz. the promise of the blessed

* Carm. Lip. conf. p. 294. † In locum. ‡ Discourse 41. p. 519. &c.

seed, and a portion in the land of Canaan, for the maintenance of which a government was established in his family. This prophecy promises a longer continuance of the government in the house of Judah than other tribes were to expect, and fixes a term for the duration of Judah's sceptre. What could make this distinction but the peculiar blessing given to Judah? And taking both his blessings together, is it not natural to think that the continuance of his temporal dominion and inheritance is assured to him to last till the commencement of his better promise? This is according to the analogy of all the prophecies from Abraham's time; in all which the land of Canaan is inseparably annexed to the promise of the blessed seed. Whoever had the one promise had the other; whoever was excluded from the one was excluded from the other. For this reason Ishmael and Esau were sent out to plant other countries, and had not a foot allowed them in the land of Canaan. On the settlement made by Jacob in his family, the land of Canaan was divided; but that part of it which attended on the promise of the blessed seed, was (as formerly) so united and annexed to that promise, that it could not be intirely forfeited and lost until the blessed seed came. And this is the reason why the land of Judah, in distinction from the land possessed by the other tribes, is called by the prophet Isaiah the land of Immanuel: 'He shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck, and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel:' Isaiah viii. 8. What other reason can be assigned for calling the land of the house of Judah the land of Immanuel, rather than any other part of the land of Canaan, but this very prophecy now under consideration? which was indeed a settlement of the land of Judah for a term not to expire until Immanuel came.

'Unto him shall the gathering of the people be.' They who understood this passage as relating to the Messiah, have great reason on their side, as well from parallel places of Scripture as from the authority of the most ancient interpreters. But yet some learned men are otherwise minded, and think that these words by natural construction are to be referred to Judah;*

* See Mr. Le Clerc's comment and note on the place.

and considering that Judah is the person here principally concerned, and whose condition in the last days is described; that Shiloh is not, in grammatical construction, the principal person in this passage, but is mentioned only as the *terminus ad quem*, the term to which the sceptre should continue with Judah; it seems more consonant to the rules of language to appropriate this character to Judah than to Shiloh. As to the main of the prophecy, there is no difference, whichever way we take. According to the last of the two interpretations, the prophecy contains the most exact description of the state and polity of Judah, during the continuance of his sceptre after the sceptres were removed from the other tribes of Israel, that can be imagined; for the remnant of all the tribes after the Assyrian captivity were indeed gathered to Judah, and fell under the obedience of that one tribe; and the whole nation, from being styled the people of Israel, were thenceforwards styled the people of Judah, or Jews. In this sense the prophecy began to operate immediately on the division of the two kingdoms. God promised Solomon to 'give one tribe to his son for his servant David's sake:' 1 Kings xi. 13. which is twice again repeated in the same chapter; ver. 32. 36. But in truth two tribes, that of Judah and that of Benjamin, together with part of the tribe of Simeon, and many families of the Levites, and of the other tribes who dwelt within the borders of Judah, remained under the obedience of the kingdom of Judah; and no reason can be given why this body is called one tribe, but only this, that the tribe of Judah alone maintained its power and constitution; the rest were all gathered to this tribe, and sank in it. This account may be collected from the text itself: it is said that the 'children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them:' 1 Kings xii. 17. And when an account is given of Rehoboam's raising forces to recover his kingdom, it is said expressly that he assembled 'all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin:' ibid. ver. 21. And yet in the very verse before it is said, 'there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only:' ibid. ver. 20. Yet still, when God sends a message to those under the obedience of Rehoboam, they are mentioned thus: 'the house of Judah and Benjamin, and the remnant of the people:'

ibid. ver. 23. These are they who afterwards were comprehended under the name of Jews; a term introduced to signify the tribe of Judah, and all the rest of the people united with and under that tribe. From the division of the kingdoms Judah was considered as making the people of one intire kingdom, and gave name to all associated with them. We have a clear account how this matter stood in the second book of Chronicles: 'The priests and the Levites that were in all Israel resorted to Rehoboam, out of all their coasts—And after them, out of all the tribes of Israel, such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel, came to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers. So they strengthened the *kingdom* of Judah:' 2 Chron. xi. 13. 16. 17. xv. 9. All who came from other tribes were considered but as an additional strength to Judah; they preserved no distinct polity of their own, as belonging to other tribes. From the time of the Assyrian captivity, the case is very plain; there remained, without doubt, many private families and persons in the land who escaped in the general confusion; but they subsisted not as parts of distinct tribes, but fell under the dominion and power of Judah; as appears in the reformation made by king Josiah, which reached not only to the cities of Judah, but to all the 'countries that pertained to the children of Israel,' to the cities of 'Manasseh and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali:' 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6. 33. Cities in which the kings of Judah had no influence or authority, so long as the separate kingdom of Israel subsisted. After the return from the Babylonish captivity, we hear of little else but Jews, though we know the Benjamites were joined with them; and the decree of Cyrus being a general permission for the return of all the tribes, many families of other tribes returned to their own country: but all these were gathered to Judah, and became one people: 1 Chron. ix. 3. And in this state and condition things continued till the coming of Christ, and the last destruction of the nation by the Roman power: Luke ii. 36. Acts xxvi. 7.

If we consider how the event corresponds to this interpretation of the prophecy in other respects, we shall find that from the death of Jacob there was a government settled in the several tribes, with respect to their own distinct people: that

the heads of tribes together did, by common consent, administer the affairs of the people in general. This appears during the abode of the children of Israel in Egypt; for Moses and Aaron were sent to the elders of the people: Exod. iii. 16. iv. 29.* These elders were heads of houses, as appears soon after in the history, Exod. vi. 14.† and rulers of the congregation, Exod. xvi. 22.‡ That the people were formed into tribes in Egypt is plain; because they are mentioned in that capacity as soon as they got into the wilderness, without any new order or constitution to make them so. The stones of the priest's breastplate were twelve by the appointment of God, to answer to the number, and to bear the names of the twelve tribes: Exod. xxxix. 14. and when God orders an account to be taken of the number of the children of Israel, soon after their coming out of Egypt, a man of every tribe, and head of the house of his fathers, is appointed to assist Moses: Numb. i. 3. These heads of houses are particularly reckoned up and named; and their quality and dignity in Israel is set forth in these words, 'these were the renowned of the congregation, princes of the tribes of their fathers, heads of thousands in Israel:' ibid. ver. 16.

Since then there were elders and heads of houses in Egypt, who acted with authority for the people, and to whom therefore the message of God by Moses and Aaron was directed; since the destruction of tribes appears plainly as soon as the people came out of Egypt, and princes of the people appear transacting the affairs of their people; and no appointment or constitution to settle these tribes appears from the time of Jacob; and since there is no mention of any tribe in Israel until Jacob's appointment of them just before his death; it is manifest that this constitution owes its rise to Jacob's appointment, and took place from that time.

From this time to the time of the captivity of Babylon, there

* Τὴν γερουσίαν τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ. The senate of the children Israel. LXX. Cœtum filiorum Israel. Vulg. Exod. xii. 3.

† Ἀρχηγοὶ οἴκων πατριῶν αὐτῶν, LXX. Principes domorum per familias suas, Vulg.

‡ Ἄρχοντες τῆς συναγωγῆς, LXX.

is no suspicion that the tribe of Judah wanted rulers and princes within themselves: the power of the heads of tribes subsisted under the government of the kings of Judah and Israel, and was so considerable, that nothing of moment was done without their advice and consent.*

The ten tribes which constituted the kingdom of Israel were carried into captivity by Salmaneser about seven hundred years before Christ; and this put an end to the being of these tribes: they never recovered again, or appeared as a people from that time to this. And here the completion of the prophecy relating to the continuation of Judah's sceptre after the removal of the others, has its commencement.

The division of the kingdom prepared the way for the completion of this prophecy. Had all the tribes continued under one head, they would probably have all undergone the same fate; but being divided in interest, and having different kings, and consequently not being concerned together in matters of peace and war, their fortunes proved very different; for the Assyrian captivity was ruin to the ten tribes, but the Babylonish captivity was only a seventy years' punishment of Judah.

The seventy years of the Babylonish captivity is the only period of time that can create any difficulty on this scheme. But if we consider that the Jews were not carried to Babylon to be slaves, but were transplanted as a colony, to people the great and newly enlarged city of Babylon;† that they are commanded therefore by the prophet to build houses and plant gardens; and to seek the peace of the city in which they were captives, Jer. xxix. 5. 7.—circumstances which prove them not to have been slaves in Babylon;—that on the expiration of the seventy years many of them were so well settled in ease and plenty that they refused to return to their own country

* Hi tribuum principes reipublicæ Hebraicæ erant Megistanes, et capita; et totius populi magistratui, sive judex esset sive rex, aderant; et cum illo sedentes partim consilio inibant, partim jus reddebant. Quinetiam simul cum summo reipublicæ capite, judice, aut rege, se obligabant, si quid esset jurejurando publico sanciendum.—Menoch. de Rep. Heb. lib. i. cap. 6.

† See Dr. Prideaux's Connexion of the Old and New Testament, Part i. b. ii. p. 96. 8vo. edit.

again;—if we consider farther, that the Jews lived at Babylon as a distinct people, and were governed in their own affairs by their own rulers and elders, appointed feasts and fasts, and ordered all other matters relating to their own civil and ecclesiastical affairs within themselves;* it will take off the weight of this difficulty, and show us that the power and sceptre of Judah relative to the being and subsistence of the tribe, were not removed during this captivity. And indeed what reason is there to think that this constitution was disturbed by the transplanting the people to Babylon, which began under the power of the kings of Egypt, and subsisted with all the forms and changes of government, which the people of Israel underwent, from their coming out of the Egyptian bondage to their going into the captivity of Babylon? Sure we are from the accounts preserved in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, Ezra i. 5. ii. 68. iii. 12. viii. 1. ix. 1. x. 14. Nehem. ii. 16. iv. 14. 19. vi. 17. that the tribes of Judah and Benjamin subsisted as such during the captivity, and preserved very regular accounts of their genealogies. That they had likewise their chiefs and elders who decided their affairs, there is no doubt; they are mentioned in Ezra and Nehemiah as the persons managing the great affairs of the return, and re-establishing the service of God in Jerusalem: that they came back to their own country as a people and nation governed by their own laws, is evident from the complaint sent against them to Artaxerxes, in which they make too great a figure, and are represented too considerable to be thought a set of mere slaves, subjected intirely to a foreign yoke, without law or government of their own: Ezra iv. 11. It is true that from the time of their captivity the Jews were never so free a people again as they had been formerly; they lived under the subjec-

* The decree for destroying the Jews in apocryphal Esther is founded in this, 'that they had laws contrary to all nations, and continually despised the commandments of the king,' ch. xiii. ver. 4. And when the decree is reversed, they are said to live by most just laws, ch. xvi. ver. 15. Esther, in her prayer for the people, says, 'O Lord, give not thy sceptre unto them that be nothing, and let them not laugh at our fall,' ch. xiv. 11. And if the writer of the History of Susanna knew any thing of the state of the Jews in Babylon, it is plain they had rulers and judges of their own, who executed their laws even in capital causes: ver. 41. and 62.

tion of the Persian monarch, and under the empire of the Greeks and Romans to their last destruction; but still they lived as a distinct people governed by their own law:* and the authority of the Persian and other kings over them destroyed not the rule and authority of Judah, which subsisted with it; as it had, in its first commencement, subsisted under the kings of Egypt, and oftentimes under judges and kings of their own. How the case stood in the time of the Asmonean princes may be collected from several passages of the Maccabees, but especially from the preambles of public leagues made by and with the Jews.† Historians oftentimes speak loosely, but authentic public acts preserve forms, and show in what hands the government resides. The ambassadors sent from Jerusalem to Rome speak in the name of Judas Maccabæus and his brethren, and the people of the Jews: 1 Mac. viii. 20. The league which followed on this application to Rome, is styled, 'a covenant with the people of the Jews:' ibid. v. 29. xii. 3. xv. 17. When the league was made with the Lacedæmonians, the public letter was in the following style: 'Jonathan the high priest, and the elders of the nation and the priests, and the other people of the Jews:' xii. 6. When Simon was their governor, his authority was conveyed to him 'in the congregation of the priests and the people, and rulers of the nation and elders of the country:' xiv. 28. These are elsewhere called 'the council,' and the 'rest of the Jews:' 2 Macc. xi. 27. and the 'people of the Jews:' ibid. v. 34. These instances are sufficient to show that the polity of the Jews as a distinct people, under heads and rulers of their own, subsisted in this period, and was not extinguished by the power of the Asmonean princes.

That things continued in this state to the very death of Christ may be evinced from many passages in the gospel; some I shall produce, and close this article.

When our Saviour tells the Jews, 'the truth shall make you free,' they reply, 'we are Abraham's children, and were never

* Artaxerxes' commission to Ezra is express, that he should appoint such magistrates and judges, 'as know the laws of thy God.'

† Περσῶν καὶ μετ' ἐκείνους ἡγουμένων τῆς Ἀσίας Μακεδόνων, Αἰγύπτιοι μὲν ἐδούλευον ἀνδραπόδων οὐδὲν διαφέροντες· ἡμεῖς δὲ ὄντες ἐλεύθεροι πρυσέτι καὶ τῶν περιξ πόλεων ἤρχομεν, &c. Joseph. contra Apion. lib. ii. sect. ii.

in bondage to any man :' John viii. 32. 33. Surely they had not forgot their captivity in Babylon, much less could they be ignorant of the power of the Romans over them at that time; and yet you see they account themselves free. And so they were, for they lived by their own laws, and executed judgment among themselves. This is plain from the case of the woman taken in adultery; 'Moses in the law,' say the Scribes and Pharisees, 'commanded us that such should be stoned, but what sayest thou?' John viii. 5. When our Saviour foretels his disciples that they should be 'delivered up to councils, and scourged in synagogues,' Matt. x. 17. he shows at the same time what power and authority were exercised in the councils and synagogues of the Jews. When Pilate, willing to be delivered of Jesus, says to the Jews, 'take ye him and crucify him,' John xix. 6. and again, 'take ye him, and judge him according to your own law,' John xviii. 31. he also shows that the Jews lived under their own law, and had the exercise of judicial authority among themselves.* This was the condition of things at the death of Christ.

By this deduction it appears evidently that the sceptre placed in the hand of Judah by his father Jacob just before his death, continued in his posterity till the very death of Christ. From that time all things began to work towards the destruction of the Jewish polity, and within a few years their city, temple, and government were utterly ruined; and the Jews, not carried into a gentle captivity, to enjoy their law and live as a distinct people in a foreign country, but they were sold like beasts in a market, and became slaves in the strictest sense, and from that day to this have had neither prince nor lawgiver among them. Nor will they ever be able, after all their pretences, to show any signs or marks of the sceptre among them, till they discover the unknown country, 'where never mankind dwelt,' and where the apocryphal Esdras has placed their brethren of the ten tribes: 2 Esdr. xiii. 41.

Before I take leave of this subject, it is necessary to observe that this interpretation of the prophecy of Jacob relating to

* See this proved at large by Wagenseil, Carm. Lip. Con. p. 299. &c.

Judah, is very much confirmed by another prophecy given by Moses not long before his death. In the 33rd chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses blesses the tribes; and as there are many passages in this last benediction of Moses which correspond to the blessings pronounced by Jacob, so particularly the blessing of Judah by Moses seems to relate to the last state of that tribe, and the continuance of the sceptre of Judah after the dispersion of the other tribes. The words of Moses are these; 'Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient for him, and be thou an help to him from his enemies:' Deut. xxxiii. 7. This benediction cannot relate to the time when it was given; for then Judah's hands were very sufficient for him, this tribe being by much the greatest of the twelve tribes, as appears by two different accounts of the forces of Israel in the book of Number, i. and xxvi.; and there was more reason to put up this petition for several other tribes than for Judah. Besides, what is the meaning of 'bringing Judah to his people?' How were he and his people at this time separated? What means likewise the other part of the petition? 'Be thou an help to him from his enemies.' This petition supposes a state of distress; yet what distress was Judah in at this time, at least what greater distress than the other tribes? The ancient Targums and some old versions understand the first petition of bringing Judah back to his people, to be only a request in his behalf for safe return from the day of battle; but was there not the same reason for the same petition in behalf of every tribe? Nay, how much better would it have suited Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, who left their people and their settlements on the other side of Jordan, and passed over the river in the very front of the battle to assist their brethren? Josh. iv. 12.

But if you refer this prophecy to the prophecy of Jacob, and to the continuance of the sceptre of Judah after the destruction of the other tribes, every expression is natural and proper, and suited to the occasion. Do but suppose Moses in the spirit of prophecy to have a sight of the state of affairs when all the people were in captivity, and you will see how this prophetic prayer answers to that state. All the tribes were in captivity, the ten tribes in Assyria, and Judah in Babylon; but it was

implied in Jacob's prophecy, that Judah should retain the sceptre, and return again; for Judah only therefore does Moses pray, that he may 'come to his people again.' Jacob had foretold that at this time the 'gathering of the people should be to Judah;' that he should be all in all, the only head of all the remnant of Israel. These people, destined to be gathered to Judah, were now no people, could be no people till the return of Judah; at which return many of all the tribes were to join themselves to Judah, and with him to form one people; how properly then does Moses pray that 'Judah might return to his people?'

'Let his hands be sufficient for him.' Good reason was there for this petition, for scarcely were his hands sufficient at the return from Babylon. The tribe of Judah, Num. xxvi. 22. in Moses's time consisted of 76,500. reckoning only those of twenty years old and upward. But on the return from Babylon, Judah, with Benjamin, the Levites, and the remnant of Israel, made only 42,360. Ezra ii. 64.; and in so weak a state they were, that Sanballat in great scorn said, 'what do these feeble Jews?' Neh. iv. 2. And the people themselves complain, as being not sufficient to go through the toil of building the wall: 'And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish, so that we are not able to build the wall:' Nehem. iv. 10.

'Be thou an help to him from his enemies.' The books of Ezra and Nehemiah are convincing proofs of the great difficulties and oppositions which the Jews found in setting up their temple and city. Once their enemies had so prevailed, that orders came from the court of Persia to stop all their proceedings; and even at last, when Nehemiah came to their assistance with a new commission from Artaxerxes, they were so beset with enemies, that the men employed in building the wall 'every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon:' Neh. iv. 17.

Lay these two prophecies now together: Jacob foretels that Judah's sceptre should continue till Shiloh came; which is in effect foretelling that the sceptres of the other tribes should not continue so long. Moses in the spirit of prophecy sees the desolation of all the tribes; he sees the tribes of the kingdom

of Israel carried away by the Assyrians, the people of Judah by the Babylonians: he sees that Judah should again return, weak, harassed, and scarcely able to maintain himself in his own country; for them therefore he conceives this prophetic prayer: 'Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and bring him unto his people: let his hands be sufficient for him, and be thou an help to him from his enemies.'

You will say, perhaps, why did not Jacob foretel also the continuance of the sceptre of Benjamin, for the tribe of Benjamin ran the same fortune with that of Judah; they went together into captivity, they returned home together, and were both in being when Shiloh came? In answer to this I have two things to offer.

First, it has already appeared that from the division of the kingdoms after the death of Solomon, the tribe of Benjamin, and the remnant of Israel, that is, part of all the other tribes, adhered to Judah as their head, and this was consonant unto Jacob's prophecy: 'Unto him shall the gathering of the people be.'

Secondly, though the continuance of the sceptre of Benjamin is not foretold (for the sceptre was to be Judah's), yet the continuance of the tribe or people of Benjamin is distinctly foretold both by Jacob and Moses. The blessing of Benjamin, as delivered by Jacob, is thus: 'Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.' As delivered by Moses, it is thus: 'Of Benjamin, he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him, and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.' When Jacob professes to declare what shall befal his sons in the last times, is it hard to say what must be understood by the morning and night in Jacob's prophecy concerning Benjamin? The natural morning and night cannot possibly be understood here; and what other morning and night can you suppose intended, but the morning and the night of the Jewish* state? For this state is

* Thus some Jewish interpreters, referred to by Bochart, understood the expression. 'Manè, id est, primis Israelitici regni temporibus——Sub vesperam, id est, post captivitatis Babylonicæ tempora.'—Hieron. cap. x. p. 828.

the subject of all Jacob's prophecy from one end to the other; consequently it is here foretold of Benjamin, that he should continue to the very last times of the Jewish state. And this interpretation is confirmed by Moses's prophecy; for the prophecy of Moses is in truth an exposition of Jacob's prophecy. 'Benjamin,' says Moses, 'shall dwell in safety: the Lord shall cover him all the day long, he shall dwell between his shoulders.' What is this, all the day long? You see how Benjamin is distinguished; he is to dwell in safety, under the cover of the Lord, and between his shoulders all the day long. Does not this import a promise of a longer continuance to Benjamin than to the other tribes? And was it not most exactly fulfilled?

The learned Bochart, on very slight grounds, supposes an inversion in the order of the words in Jacob's prophecy concerning Benjamin; and by the morning and the night he understands the night and morning; so that the time described is, in his sense, the whole night, and not the whole day. All this is built on the property of the wolf, to which Benjamin is compared. It is the night wolf, says Bochart, which catches the prey in the night, and feeds on it in the morning. But I very much question whether the style of the Scripture will bear the test of such classic nicety and exactness. And though this imagination has been followed by considerable commentators, yet since Moses, in his own prophecy on Benjamin, has expounded this morning and night by all the day long, there is no room to make any farther question about it.

I have nothing more to add, but to acquaint the reader that the interpretation of Jacob's prophecy now advanced is not a mere invention of my own; it is, as to the main point, the same with that which is the fourth in Huetius, and by him rejected, but for such reasons as have been fully obviated in this account. It is the same which Junius and Tremellius, and our own learned countryman Ainsworth, espoused; and which not many years ago was revived and improved by Mr. Ioncourt. This last mentioned gentleman published several letters on obscure passages of Scripture, and amongst the rest one on the sceptre of Judah, which are very well worth the reading. As to the letter on the sceptre of Judah, if I had thought nothing

wanting in it to clear this prophecy, I would not have troubled the world with this dissertation. But whether I have succeeded better in this attempt than those who have gone before me in the same argument, belongs not to me to judge.

SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION IV.

AUTHOR'S intention to consider the prophecy relating to this fact, as it stands in Zechariah ix. 9. No circumstance relating to the Messiah has occasioned more profane wit and ridicule, arising from the peculiar prejudices of our time and country. Contemptible as an ass, or a man riding on it, may be at present, from the beginning it was not so: this shown from passages relating to the governors and judges of Israel. From the prophecy of Zechariah, the person so riding is described as a *king*, as a *just* king, and *one having salvation*. If we look into the present, or into the ancient world, we shall not find reason to appropriate this custom to kings; much less shall we find any connexion between the justice or power of a prince to save his people, and this circumstance of his *riding on the foal of an ass*. Since then this prophetical character cannot be accounted for by the condition of kings in general, there must have been something peculiar in that of a king of *Israel*, which marks the propriety of the character. The prosperity and success of nations in general have borne some proportion to their force and power, to the conduct and ability of their leaders. This was not so with the Jews: see Psalm xliv. 3. They were never so weak as when they made themselves strong; for God had taken the defence of Israel on himself; and when they took it out of his hands, they were sure to be undone. Hence, so tender was he of his honor, so concerned to justify his promise in the eyes of the world, that he would not always allow natural causes to interfere in their deliverance: see Judges vii. 2. For the same reason (to come

nearer to our purpose) God would not permit them to have horses and chariots of war for their defence; not because they were useless in war, since the strength of the ancient militia consisted in them; and God, in the book of Job, describes the horse as if made for the day of battle. But this was the very reason why he suffered not his people to use it for a defence. He wanted neither horse nor foot to fight his battles: proofs of this given, from the Exodus and from the victories of Joshua, who is commanded to destroy the horses. These observations give light to a general precept of the law, in which every prince of Israel was concerned, and on which the prophecy before us depends; *he should not multiply horses to himself:* &c. Deut. xvii. 16. The true reason of this law expressed in Deut. xx. 1. This law therefore was to be a standing trial of prince and people, whether they had confidence in God their deliverer. In this view there is sense in it: in any other it is unaccountable. It is shown that this law was observed for near four hundred years, to the end of David's reign, and in part of Solomon's. The mention sometimes made of chariots and horses alludes to regal state and times of peace: see Jer. xvii. 25. During the above mentioned period, it is remarkable that the people never suffered for want of force and strength in war, though they were sometimes punished for their idolatry, &c. David also carried the kingdom to its highest pitch of prosperity, yet he himself rode on a mule, and provided no better equipage for his son on the day of his coronation: 1 Kings i. 33. 34. In the reign of Solomon things altered, and *he had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen:* 1 Kings iv. 26. His successors followed his example. What ensued from such a state of things? Troubles soon overtook him: the Edomite and the king of Damascus insulted him; and at his death, to humble the pride of Israel, a division of the kingdom took place: hence wars between them, subjection to Egypt, and the captivities of Assyria and Baby-

lon. During this period God oftentimes gave them signal deliverances; but these were not effected by their great forces, but by his interposition; see 2 Kings xviii. 23. It appears then that David was the last of the rulers over Israel who observed the law against multiplying horses; and he was the last who pretended to be a deliverer of the people. This truth seen by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews xi. 32—34. But it may be asked, were the kings of Judah and Israel punished for having horses and chariots in their armies? does not Scripture charge them with idolatry and other crimes? Answered, true it does: but was it not a crime thus to multiply horses and chariots? The shortest answer to the question will be to examine what their own prophets say with respect to this cause of their ruin: see Isaiah ii. 6. 7. xxxi. 1. Hosea xiv. 3. Having seen then what the law, and the prophets, and the experience of ages had taught the Jews to think of their princes and their martial preparations, let us look back to the prophecy relating to the Messias, Zech. ix. 9. Here the king foretold was to save the people. Consider what sort of a king it was probable that God would send to save them. Would he be like those who had undone them, or those who had been deliverers of their country? The king foretold was also to be just, meek, and lowly: could he have deserved this character had he appeared in the pomp of war, with horses and chariots, in opposition to God's law? Or could he bring salvation by those means which God had forbidden? Hence it may be seen how essential it was to the character of such a king of Israel to come as he was foretold. If any doubt remain, see what immediately follows: *and I will cut off the* chariot *from Ephraim, and the* horse *from Jerusalem.* To the same purpose speaks Hosea i. 7. and Micah v. 10. 11. These passages support each other, and show what the prophet Zechariah had in view. It is shown that there is nothing in all this to excite the ridicule of unbelievers. Some reflexions hence

arise. First, the law given to the kings of Israel, considered with the history of that nation, forms a very strong presumption for the divine original of the law of Moses: this explained. Secondly, we may collect from hence the nature of David's crime in numbering the people: this explained. Thirdly, it may be a doubt whether king Josiah was not guilty of the same fault in his warlike preparations against the king of Egypt: this also explained.

DISSERTATION IV.

CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

THE circumstances of this piece of Scripture history are well known, and not less to those who despise than to those who receive the gospel. My intention is to consider the prophecy relating to this fact, as it stands in Zechariah, chap. ix. ver. 9.; and though the subject of this dissertation has no immediate relation to the preceding discourses, yet it may not perhaps be improper to subjoin to them the explication of a passage, which is sure always to find its way into every conversation or controversy on this subject of prophecy.

There is indeed no circumstance relating to the Messiah that has given occasion to more profane wit and ridicule than this now before us. We reckon an ass to be a contemptible creature; and a man, especially a man of character, riding on an ass, to be a ridiculous figure. These are prejudices of our time and country; and when they who look no farther than to the manners and customs which are before them, examine this part of sacred story by the standard of modern prejudices, they see, or think they see, something quite inconsistent with the gravity and dignity of the person pretending to be king of the Jews, when Christ is represented entering in triumph into Jerusalem mounted on an ass.

But contemptible as an ass, or a man riding on an ass, may be at present, from the beginning it was not so. In many countries, and particularly in Judea, persons of the highest distinction were usually so mounted. The governors of Israel are described in the song of Deborah as riding on white asses: Judg. v. 10. And the thirty sons of Jair, who was judge and prince over Israel twenty-two years, are said to ride on thirty asses: Judg. x. 4. And another judge of Israel is recorded to

have had forty sons and thirty nephews that rode on seventy ass colts: Judg. xii. 14.

Were it at all necessary, it would be easy to confirm this observation with many more authorities; but this passage of Scripture will furnish other inquiries, and of a more serious consideration.

For supposing it to have been a usual thing to ride on an ass, how comes this usual thing to be mentioned in relation to the Messiah as a mark of distinction? Might not the prophet on this supposition as well have said, he should come walking on foot? And would he not have been as well known by one character as by the other? Besides,

If you turn to the book of Zechariah, where this prophecy is to be found, you will see the person there described to be a king, a just king, and one having salvation: and what is there in this character of riding on the foal of an ass that is peculiar to a king, to a just king, and to one who was to bring salvation and deliverance to his people?

If we look into the present or into the ancient world, we shall not find reason to appropriate this character to kings: those of Egypt, Assyria, and of other nations neighbors to Judea, rode in another manner: much less shall we be able to find any connexion between the justice and ability of a prince to save his people, and this circumstance of riding on the foal of an ass.

Since then this prophetical character can never be accounted for by considering the state and condition of kings in general, there must needs have been something very peculiar in the circumstances of a king of Israel, on which the propriety of this character is founded.

I shall therefore endeavor to trace out this peculiar circumstance, and to set this prophecy in a proper light; which has been very greatly abused, and, perhaps, only because it has been very little understood.

If we look into the history of the rise and fall of nations, we shall generally find that their prosperity and success have borne some proportion to their force and power, and to the conduct and ability of their leaders; but with the Jews, who from slaves in Egypt, became a great and powerful people, the case

was not so. The best and greatest of their kings, and he who carried the empire to the greatest height, has left us another account of their affairs. 'The people,' says he, 'got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favor unto them:' Psal. xliv. 3. When we read this and other like passages, we are apt to ascribe them to the piety and devotion of the Psalmist, and to look on them only as acknowlegements of God's general providence in the affairs of the world; and this makes us apt to overlook, or not sufficiently to attend to, the historical truth which they contain. It is true, indeed, that all success may in a just sense be ascribed to God; that it is he who giveth victory unto kings, but yet he ordinarily makes use of natural means; and it is no offence to his providence, that princes list their thousands of horse and foot to secure themselves and their dominions. But with the Jews it was otherwise: they were never so weak as when they made themselves strong; never so certainly ruined, as when their force was great enough to create in them a confidence in themselves. For God had taken the defence of Israel on himself; and whenever the people took it out of his hands, and placed it in their own, they were sure to be undone.

Nay, so tender was God of his honor in this respect, and so concerned to justify his promise to defend Israel in the eyes of the world, that he would not always permit natural causes to interfere in their deliverance, lest the people should grow doubtful to whom they should ascribe their victories. When Gideon stood up to deliver the people from the Midianites, he raised an army of thirty-two thousand men: God refused to go forth with so great an host, and the reason given for it is this: 'the people that are with thee, are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me:' Judges vii. 2. Accordingly, the thirty-two thousand were reduced to three hundred, and by them the host of Midian was overthrown.

To come nearer to our present purpose. For the same reason it was that God would not permit the people to have horses and chariots of war for their defence; not because they

were thought useless in war, for it is well known that the strength of the ancient militia consisted chiefly in them, as appears in the Scripture history, and in the oldest writers of profane story. Such was the strength of Egypt, and such the force of the Assyrians, and of the other eastern nations. And it is observable, that when God is introduced in the book of Job, setting forth the great works of the creation, he describes the horse as if made on purpose for the day of battle. 'Hast thou (says God) given the horse strength? Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?

'Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? The glory of his nostrils is terrible.

'He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength; he goeth on to meet the armed men.

'He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted: neither turneth he back from the sword.

'The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.

'He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage; neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet.

'He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha! and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.'

But this courage, this aptness for war in horses, was the very reason why God would not suffer his people to make use of them for their defence. He himself had undertaken their cause, and he wanted neither horse nor foot to fight his battles. Of this he gave sufficient proofs in the first instance of their deliverance. When he brought them out of Egypt, they were a mere crowd of women and children, and of men trained up in slavery, under hard and cruel task-masters. On the Egyptians' side were the ancient soldiery of the kingdom, a mighty power of chariots and horses, led on by princes and by nobles. And what was the issue? The strength of Egypt was destroyed, and the people saved; and the glory which God took to himself in saving a weak people against the strength of the chariots and horses of Pharoah, is finely described in the song of Moses.

'I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

'The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name. Pharoah's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea.'

It may be thought perhaps no wonder that the people at this time had neither chariots nor horses; for where should they have them? They were themselves but slaves, and doubtless their masters were cautious enough not to put the power of war into their hands. Let us go on then and see how the case stood afterwards, when the people had an opportunity of furnishing themselves with horses and chariots, if it had been lawful for them so to do. After the death of Moses, Joshua was in command over the people: his victories over the Canaanites so alarmed the neighbouring princes, that with one consent they confederated against him, and brought together an incredible multitude in arms; and as it is particularly remarked, 'with horses and chariots very many.' Joshua prevailed against them, and took all their horses and chariots, and had an opportunity of strengthening his army with cavalry. But observe the express command of God to him: 'thou shalt hough, (or hamstring,) their horses, and burn their chariots with fire:' Josh. xi. 6. Is this the common practice of war? Do princes, who want horses to mount their own troops, use to destroy those taken from the enemy, or render them useless by hamstringing them? There can be no foundation for the command to destroy the horses but this only, that it was not lawful for Joshua to keep them, for the reason already given.

I have laid these observations together, to give light to a general precept of the law, in which every prince who should succeed to the government of Israel was concerned; and on which the true interpretation of the prophecy now before us does, as I conceive, depend. It is to be found in the 17th of Deut. in these words: 'He (that is, whoever should be king of Israel) should not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses.' If we consider the situation of Judah, how it was surrounded by warlike nations, who had strong armies both of horse and foot, it will be impossible to justify this law by the measures of human prudence; but the true reason of the law is expressed in the 20th of Deut.: 'When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses and chariots, and

a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt.' When God forbade his people the use of horses and chariots, he promised that he would be to them instead of horses and chariots. This law therefore was to be a standing trial of prince and people, whether they had trust and confidence in God their deliverer. In this view there is sense in the law; for he who gave it knew how to remedy the inconveniences which naturally attend it. In any other view it is unaccountable; and if weighed in the scales of worldly politics, ridiculous and absurd.

The next thing to be considered is, what effect this law produced, and what influence the obedience or disobedience of the princes to this law had on the affairs of Israel.

It is evident from the Jewish history that this law was observed for near four hundred years, to the end of David's reign, and in part of Solomon's. That Joshua had no chariots or horses in his army has been already observed. When Deborah and Baruch delivered Israel from Sisera, who had nine hundred chariots of iron, Judg. v. 15. it is expressly said in the text, that 'Baruch was sent on foot into the valley.' And in this manner did the ancient judges of Israel wage war, who were raised up from time to time by God to deliver his people; and in this manner David, who extended his empire from Egypt to Syria, and eastwards as far as Euphrates, in this manner did he wage war; not for want of chariots and horses, for he took from Hadadezar, son to the king of Zobah, in one day a thousand chariots and seven hundred horsemen; but he 'houghed all the chariot horses, reserving of them only for an hundred chariots:' 2 Sam. viii. 4. When he had taken a thousand chariots with their horses, and destroyed nine out of ten, it is evident he had no thought of raising a military force of this kind; probably he retained them for his state, and might do it lawfully without incurring the guilt of multiplying horses, which are the terms in which the law is conceived. Certain it is he made no use of them in war; and so far he complied with the true sense and spirit of the law. What use he made of them is nowhere said; but when Absalom aimed at the crown, he prepared chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him,

2 Sam. xv. 1. which was plainly affecting the pomp and state of a king; and yet in the day of battle we find him mounted on a mule, the colt of an ass. And if we may judge what the king did, by seeing what this rival of the crown affected to do, it is plain David's hundred chariots were used for state in peace, and not for strength in war. And in this sense I conceive we are to understand a passage in Jeremiah, where he promises the people of Judah that if they prove obedient, there 'should enter into the gates of the city kings and princes, sitting on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses:' Jer. xvii. 25. which is plainly a description of a state of peace and security, (compare ver. 27.) and taken in any other sense it must stand in contradiction to the law in Deuteronomy and many other texts of Scripture.* But to go on.

It is very much to be remarked that during this period, (that is, from the coming out of Egypt to the end of David's reign,) the people of Israel never suffered for want of force and strength in war; they were often punished, as they often deserved it, for their idolatry; but whenever they repented and turned to God, their deliverance did not wait for want of forces. Troops, few in number, and seemingly unfit for action, supported neither by chariots nor by horsemen, proved an overmatch for royal armies. This may be verified in the instances of Gideon, Baruch, Jephthah, and Samuel, and of all others called forth by God to save his people.

During this period also it was that the kingdom of Israel was carried to its utmost height by David. He held the kings about him, how gallantly soever they and their troops were mounted, under tribute and subjection, though he himself rode on a mule, and provided no better equipage for his son on his coronation day. 'Cause,' says David, 'Solomon my son to ride on mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon: and let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel:' 1 Kings i. 33. 34. When David looked

* If the ninth and following chapters of Zechariah are, indeed, (as Mr. Mede and other learned think,) parts of the prophecy of Jeremiah, this distinction will be necessary to reconcile this passage, Jer. xvii. 25. and that which is now to be found, Zech. ix. 2.

back and contemplated on this state of things, he might well say, 'some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God:' Psalm xx. 7.

In the reign of Solomon things quickly changed. He married the daughter of the king of Egypt, and opened a commerce between that country and his own; and the next news we hear of him is, 'that he had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen:' 1 Kings iv. 26. They who succeeded him followed his example; and from his time the kings of Judah and Israel had, whenever they were able to keep them, a strength of chariots and horsemen.

Let us see now what they got by this change. Solomon came to a kingdom firmly established; the princes round him were tributary to him, and those at a distance feared and admired him; but troubles soon overtook him; the Edomite on one side, the king of Damascus on the other, insulted him; nor was he able with all his new forces to quell these upstart enemies.

But the most remarkable event, and which seems designed by providence to humble the pride of Israel, was the division of the kingdom on the death of Solomon; which produced a war of many years continuance between Israel and Judah, in which their forces were employed with various success in weakening and destroying each other. During this time the king of Egypt, the country which had furnished Solomon with all his horses, came up against Jerusalem, and took it, and carried away all the treasures of the temple and of the royal palace, which had been long gathering by David and Solomon: and Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, became servant to the king of Egypt: 2 Chron. xii. 8. 9. Thus did Solomon and his house prosper with their great strength of chariots and horses. Indeed we may from this time date the ruin of Israel; the two kingdoms were so weakened by their internal war, that they were unable to defend themselves against their neighbors, and became servants by turns, sometimes to the kings of Egypt, sometimes to the kings of Assyria and Babylon; till after many and great distresses they were carried into captivity, the people of Israel into Assyria, and Judah into Babylon.

During this period we find that God had not utterly forsaken his people, but oftentimes gave them very signal deliverances. But it is to be observed that these deliverances were not effected by their great forces, but by the interposition of God, when their condition was such that they lost all hope in their own strength, and were willing to rely on God. Thus was Hezekiah delivered at a time when he was so weak, that the Assyrians insolently offered him two thousand horses, if he on his part were able to set riders on them: 2 Kings xviii. 23. The case will generally be found the same in other instances.

By this short account it appears that David was the last of the rulers over Israel who observed the law against multiplying horses; and he was the last also who can be pretended to have been a deliverer of the people. This truth was seen by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who, when he reckons up the ancient worthies of his country who trusted in God, and 'by faith subdued kingdoms, who out of weakness were made strong, and waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens,' shuts up his catalogue with David, as being the last to whom these characters could be applied, and after whom there arose none like to him to save the people of Israel.

But it may be asked perhaps, were the kings of Judah and Israel punished for having chariots and horses in their armies? Does not the Scripture charge them with idolatry and many other crimes, which brought on their ruin? No doubt there were many other crimes, and of a deeper dye, for which these kings and their people were punished; but the true question is, was it a crime at all to multiply horses and chariots?

The shortest answer to this question will be, to examine what account their own prophets have given of the causes of their ruin.

Isaiah lived in the reign of four kings of Judah, and prophesied of the captivity. In his second chapter he thus recounts the sins of his people: 'They be replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers; their land also is full of

silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land also is full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots.'

So again, chap. xxxi. 'Wo to them that go down to Egypt for help, and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong: but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord.'

The prophet Hosea lived under the same kings that Isaiah did, and foresaw the miseries coming on his country; he exhorts the people to repentance, and has put a short form of confession into their mouths: the two great articles of it are these: 'We will not ride on horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, ye are our gods:' chap. xiv. 3.

Consider now what is the guilt of having a country full of horses. Moral evil surely there is none in it; and to charge all princes with iniquity who have a strength of horses in their armies, and to transfer to them the crime charged on this account on the kings of Judah and Israel, would be intolerable abuse of the phrase and language of Scripture. But the kings of Israel were exalted to the throne on condition that they should renounce the assistance of horses and horsemen, and depend on God for success in the day of battle.

Having seen then what the law and the prophets, and the experience of many ages had taught the Jews to think of their princes and their martial preparations, let us look back to the prophecy relating to the Messias, Zech. ix. 9. The words are these: 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding on an ass, and on a colt the foal of an ass.

'And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem.'

You see here that the king foretold was to save the people. Consider then what sort of king was to be expected. Is it possible to imagine that God would send a king to save them who should be like the kings who had undone them? Is it not more reasonable to imagine he should resemble those who had indeed been deliverers of their country? kings who feared

God, and therefore feared no enemy; who, though mounted on asses, and colts the foals of asses, were able to put to flight the thousands and ten thousands of chariots and horses that came against them?

The king foretold by the prophet was moreover to be just, meek, and lowly; but how could he have deserved this character, had he appeared in the pomp and pride of war, surrounded with horses and chariots, in direct opposition to the law of God? Or, as he was to bring salvation to the people, could he make use of those means which God never had prospered, and which he had sufficiently declared he never would?

You see then how essential it was to the character of a king of Israel, who was to be just, and lowly, and to bring salvation with him, that he should come riding on an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. But if any doubt can yet remain, let the prophet himself explain it, who, immediately after his description of the promised king, adds, 'and I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem;' plainly showing that the character given of the Messias, that he should ride on an ass, was in opposition to the pride of their warlike kings, who by their great strength in chariots and horses had ruined themselves and their people.

To the same purpose speaks the prophet Hosea: 'I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen:' i. 7. Thus also the prophet Micah promised deliverance to the remnant of Jacob, and then adds, 'and it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots; and I will cut off the cities of thy land, and throw down all thy strong holds:' ver. 10. 11. Some commentators have labored to reconcile these things, imagining that there is a great contradiction in promising to save the people, and at the same time to cut off their forces and throw down their strongholds: but the true sense is, that the salvation should be so perfect and complete, that they should want neither these forces nor their strongholds, for God would be to them instead of armies and fortified towns.

These passages mutually support and enlighten each other, and show undeniably what the prophet had in view when he foretold that the Messias should ride on an ass.

And what is there in all this to make sport for unbelievers? Has it appeared to be a mere trifling circumstance in the character of a king of Israel, whether he had chariots and horses of war or no? Or was it any reproach to Christ to ride into Jerusalem on the foal of an ass, when David, the greatest of his ancestors, and Solomon the wisest, as long as he was wise, rode in the same manner? Can the Jews object to this circumstance, and yet talk of the glories of David and the magnificence of Solomon, who in the midst of all their glory and magnificence did the very same thing? Or can they stumble at this character of the Messias, without forgetting by what princes their ancestors were saved, and by what undone?

From this general account of the affairs of the kings of Israel, and the particular circumstances they were under in regard to their own law, there arise some reflexions which may be properly here mentioned. As first: the law given to the kings of Israel, considered together with the history of that nation, forms a very strong presumption for the divine original of the law of Moses. For supposing Moses to be a mere human legislator, like Solon or Lycurgus, what could tempt him to forbid the princes of his country the use of horses and chariots for their defence? Should such a law be proposed for France or Germany at this day, what would the world think of it? Or supposing this law to be his own contrivance, how comes it to pass that the event and success of things through many ages does so exactly correspond to the law? that the princes prospered, and extended their dominion over great countries, when they had neither chariots nor horses; and were ruined and undone when they were strong in these forces? Can it be supposed that the history of many ages, and which relates the affairs not only of the princes of Israel, but of other contemporary kings, is all forged, and merely to show an agreement between the history and this particular law? Or how shall we account for the conduct of the prophets who saw the people ruined, and instead of reproaching them with cowardice and a neglect of their necessary defence, things which usually usher

in such misfortunes, reproach them with having been too strong, too powerful in horses and horsemen?

These appearances can never be accounted for by any human contrivance, and they plainly show that the hand of God was in this thing from the beginning to the end.

Secondly, we may from hence collect the nature of David's crime in numbering the people of Israel. Had he acted in the true spirit of a king of Israel, he would have been less solicitous about the number of his forces, and would have trusted God with the work which God had undertaken, and which he had constantly, and in David's case in a very particular manner, discharged with fidelity. Read the promise in the law—'When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them; for the Lord thy God is with thee.' And consider what but distrust in God could tempt David to number his forces? Happy had it been for him and the people, had he then reflected that God 'taketh no pleasure in the strength of a horse, neither delighteth he in any man's legs.' He ought to have remembered what his own experience had taught him, that God wanted not the assistance of horse or foot to execute the designs of his providence.

Thirdly, it may be a doubt whether king Josiah was not guilty of the same fault in his warlike preparations against the king of Egypt. Josiah has so good a character in Scripture, that both Jews and Christians have been at a loss to account for the unfortunate end he came to, being slain in battle against the king of Egypt. The learned Dr. Prideaux has justified this conduct in opposing the passage of the king of Egypt, because it was a service due to the king of Assyria, to whom Josiah was a vassal. Be it so; yet his duty to the king of Assyria could not dissolve his dependence on a higher master: he went to war as vassal of the king of Assyria, but did he ask counsel of God as king of Judah? Or was he attended to the war with such forces only as the king of Judah might lawfully use? That he had chariots and horsemen appears plainly from the account of his death, 2 Chron. xxxv. 24. for he was wounded in one chariot, removed into another to be carried off, and it is very probable that there were chariots and horsemen many in his

army, since there appears no scruple in him on this head. That this was the true or the only cause of his misfortune, I dare not affirm, for I have no express authority to support me in affirming it; but this I see, that he was found in the day of battle, not with the equipage of a king of Judah, but surrounded with forces which the law of his God had forbidden him to trust to, and which had often proved a strength fatal to his ancestors.

MISCELLANEOUS TRACTS.

SUMMARY.

NOTICE of the relation borne by the Bishop to his clergy, which renders it necessary for him to address them. To go through the various parts of the pastoral office would require too much time; he therefore confines himself to those particulars which under present circumstances demand attention. The duties of the pastoral office are to be learned from the general rules of the gospel; and in the exercise of them we must guide ourselves by the laws and constitutions of our church and kingdom.

The first and only thing now adverted to, is the obligation which the clergy are under to a constant attendance on their several cures; which is the foundation of all their other duties.

This duty arises by necessary consequence from the nature of the office which they have undertaken, as *ambassadors of Christ, overseers of the flock,* &c.; but which of these characters can be supported by one who absents himself from his cure? The case of a pastor compared with that of a pilot: the one ought no more to be absent from his flock than the other from his ship: hence the canonists hold that residence is *jure divino naturali.*

This duty, with respect to the substance or essential part of it, has been invariably the same in all times of the church; but the circumstances of it have varied, according to the different settlements and provisions made for the preachers of the gospel in different times.

In early ages the clergy lived with their bishop in the city, and were sent, as occasion required, to instruct the people in

the country: then their residence was co-equal in extent with the diocese.

After the division of dioceses into parishes, the bounds of this duty were contracted, and residence was confined to the limits of the parish, where the cure of souls is committed to the priest by the bishop: hence every non-resident rector or vicar is *primâ facie* criminal as regards the laws of the church and of the realm, till he shows a legal dispensation to justify or excuse himself.

These dispensations create the whole difficulty of this case, and are therefore considered particularly.

That the obligation to residence may be dissolved in some cases, there is no doubt, as in that of mental or bodily infirmity; since residence itself is only valuable because it enables a man to perform his duty. But there are other dispensations introduced and admitted by law, which are supposed to be founded in a general consideration of the good of the church; though many of them have outlived the reasons on which they were introduced: their pleas must be left to the conscience of individuals, as the bishop is bound by the rules of law.

Inquiry therefore is made; I. in what cases the dispensations are grantable, and by whom: II. on what conditions they are grantable.

The canon law has mentioned some cases, in which the bishop may dispense with residence; and it supposes others, leaving them to his discretion.

1. It allows of a dispensation for such as abide in some approved university for the study of divinity or canon law: the limit of this dispensation, and the reason of it stated; also in what manner it is binding on the conscience of an incumbent. Introduced by the canon law, it was approved by the legislature; but having been abused, its privileges were confined to those that were under the age of forty years, by the 28th of Hen. VIII. cap. 13. Observations on this point.

2. The canon law allows the service of the bishop to be a sufficient license for non-residence; since the necessary care and business of a diocese require that the bishop should have the assistance of one or more discreet clergymen; and it is easier to find a proper curate to serve a parish, than a proper person to advise and assist the bishop. In this case therefore the good of the church is made the foundation of the dispensation. The statute has extended this exemption to other cases not expressed in the canon law; as to the chaplains of the nobility and great officers of the crown: reason of this, to encourage virtue and religion among those whose example must have great effect; so that here also the good of the church is intended; and thence arises the restriction under which exemption is here granted: observations on this point.

3. The service of the church is another reason noticed by the canon law; as, for instance, attendance in convocation: this not mentioned by the statute, nor condemned by it; since he is not wilfully absent from his cure who is absent in obedience to the king's writ.

4. The service of the crown is, by the common law, a dispensation of residence, whilst a clerk is actually in the king's service; and only then does the statute exempt even the king's chaplains from the penalties. These are the principal cases in which non-residence is excused by the canon law, and the law of the realm; and it is manifest, from the reason of these cases, that a dispensation is granted by neither as a favor to any person; and that it is only to be justified, when the service of the church or commonwealth makes it reasonable.

This general observation on the cases for which the law has provided, will enable us to judge of those which are reserved for the discretion of the bishop.

5. The canon law admits the bishop to dispense with residence where there is *justa et rationabilis causa*. In all cases provided for by the law itself, this is the good either of

church or state; and we may be sure the law never intended that the bishop should grant dispensations as personal favors but for similar reasons, or in cases of great necessity.

That the bishops anciently had and exercised this power in the church of England, is manifest from registers, and the authority of Lyndwood. But the great question is, how this matter now stands since the statute of the 21st Hen. VIII.

The enacting part of this statute requires that every archdeacon, dean, dignitary, parson, and vicar, be constantly resident in, at, and on his dignity or benefice; or in case of plurality, at least on one. Then follows the penalty for non-residence; and in the next clause all dispensations contrary to the act are declared void.

Had the act stopped here, all dispensations of residence had been intirely taken away; but it goes on, and makes the exceptions already mentioned: besides which there is a provision for the king to give license for non-residence to his own chaplains; but it is restrained to them alone.

If this act then has restrained this power in the crown, without doubt it has restrained it in all inferior ordinaries. But it must be observed that the act itself grants no dispensation to any person in any case; and therefore those who are exempted by the act from the penalties of it, cannot justify non-residence by pleading the act, but must justify it by a dispensation from the ordinary, and by showing that it is not contrary to the act. Observations on this point.

There is one case which ought to be mentioned: it is that of vicars, who are bound by oath to perpetual residence. In the form of the oath, provision is made for the bishop to dispense: now for any absence not exceeding a month at once, and two months in a year taken together, (which is the statutable allowance,) the bishop's dispensation to the vicar is effectual, as not being contrary to the statute. If the dispensation goes farther, it is certainly void, considered as a

dispensation for residence; but the particular obligation of the oath laid on by the canon may be dispensed with by the bishop, it being the condition implied in the oath; and no oath obliges farther than the meaning of it is understood by the imposer and taker of it.

With respect to this oath, there is a common opinion that the duty of residence is not the same in the case of a rector and a vicar; but if we consider the reason and nature of this case in theory, it is impossible to imagine what could incline the governors of the church to require less duty from the former than from the latter: this point enlarged on.

Neither is there any pretence for such difference from the ecclesiastical or temporal laws of this kingdom: all canons and all statutes relating to residence, affect all incumbents equally.

The mistake has arisen from a legatine constitution still in force, in consequence of which every vicar at his institution takes an oath of perpetual residence, which is not exacted from rectors.

But to argue that rectors are not obliged to perpetual residence because vicars are obliged to it by oath, is a strange way of reasoning, and applied to any other case, would manifestly appear to be so. Instance given.

To clear up this matter, the origin of the oath is historically investigated; whence it appears to have been enjoined, not for the purpose of binding vicars to a stricter residence than rectors, but of preventing a great abuse of another kind; inasmuch as vicars thought themselves not at all obliged by the canons of residence, inasmuch as they had not benefices or titles in their churches.

There are some cases which the law does not suppose, and therefore has made no provision for them; in which it is hard to know what the bishop may equitably require of the clergy,

and what they are strictly bound to perform. Thus some livings have no house or glebe, nor any convenient house within the district; whilst others have only a cottage so mean as to afford not any conveniences to the rector or his family. The question is, what is to be done in these cases? The law does not bind to impossibilities; and therefore Lord Coke, in the sixth Report, says that the want of a house is an excuse for non-residence; for *impotentia excusat legem*. Whether this opinion be law, and how far the reason of it goes, will be considered.

Originally the bishop and his clergy lived together according to the rules laid down in the ancient canons; and in what part soever of the diocese a presbyter was, by order of his bishop, he was, properly speaking, resident on his cure: moreover in those canons the word *parish* is used to signify a diocese. In this case then the relation which the clergy had to their bishop and to the people, did not depend on their having houses among their flocks.

But as Christianity spread and believers multiplied, the old method was found very inconvenient: therefore lords of manors, &c. were encouraged to erect churches on their lands; and the bishop for this purpose yielded part of his right to such founders, permitting them to name the incumbent, but reserving to himself the power of judging of his qualification: this the origin of lay patronage: moreover it appears that a parochial church could not be consecrated until provision was made for a house and glebe.

Now this change in the outward face of the diocese was necessarily followed by a change of discipline; and this again introduced into the law of the church a new notion of residence, that is, of legal residence, which implies living and abiding not only in the parish, but in the very glebe house itself. The reason of this dilated on, showing its utility and equity; since,

if the founders of churches were obliged to build houses for the ministers, it was but equitable that the latter should keep them in repair; and the surest way to effect this was to oblige them to live in them.

The case of those considered who have no glebe houses. They are certainly appointed by the bishop to take care of their particular parishes, and are in this respect under the same obligation to residence that the clergy anciently were before the division of parishes; except that they are now fixed to one parish, and cannot be removed without their own consent. But this makes no difference in their obligation to residence, which must be as near to their flocks as conveniently can be; for though the want of a habitation may be a reason for refusing the living, it cannot be an excuse for neglect of the duty, which was undertaken at the same time.

The case of those whose houses are in a mean condition differs much from the above; for here the reason of the law, which requires strict residence, must be considered. The main thing aimed at by it, is the keeping the houses in good repair; and if at present there be many in a mean state, this arises chiefly from neglect of the law: this point enlarged on.

Consideration of the means which may be reasonably attempted towards retrieving this evil. Recommendation to incumbents to comply with the injunctions of Edw. VI. 1547. and of Eliz. 1559. to set aside a portion of their revenue yearly for repairs. If it be asked whether the ordinary can by law compel incumbents to submit to this, it is answered that he cannot; but he may say, if you like the house as it is you must live in it: and this condition, if accepted, will answer all purposes; though in many cases it would be a greater hardship han the other measure.

It is but too evident that many of the clergy have so poor a maintenance for themselves and families, that they have nothing to spare for this improvement: probably, however, the poorness

of many livings is in a great measure owing to the want of a convenient habitation; which forces the incumbent to compound for what he can get of his dues.

All incumbents then being obliged to continual residence, the law has provided for some extraordinary cases; but when it has not, they must be left to the general reason of the thing, and the judgment of the ordinary.

But supposing all circumstances to meet that may make it reasonable and proper for him to grant a dispensation, yet there are certain conditions which must be observed.

Every beneficed man licenced not to reside on his benefice, must have a curate: see canons of 1603; and such curate must have sufficient ability to discharge the duty, and *sufficient* maintenance to support him in it. In both these cases the ordinary is made the judge. Concluding observations on both.

A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO THE CLERGY AT A VISITATION HELD FOR THE DIOCESE OF LONDON, IN THE YEAR 1759.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

THE relation I bear to you makes it necessary for me on this occasion to remind you, (though of yourselves I trust not unmindful,) of the duty incumbent on you as ministers of the gospel of Christ.

To go through the several parts of the pastoral office would require more time than can be allowed for it at present: I shall therefore confine myself to such particulars as seem, in the present circumstances of things, to require our more immediate attention.

The duties of the pastoral office are to be learned from the general rules and directions of the gospel, and the nature of the office as there described; and in the exercise of these duties we must govern ourselves by the particular laws and constitutions of this Christian church and kingdom, of which we are members. These are the lights by which we must walk: and I shall consider the duties which fall within the compass of my present design, as they flow from the nature of your office, and the precepts of the gospel, and as they are adjusted and inforced by the laws of this church and kingdom.

The first thing and the only one I shall now mention to you, is the obligation you are under to a constant attendance on your several cures: I mention it first, because it is the foundation of all other duties, and it would be absurd to speak of any other without presupposing this.

This duty arises by necessary consequence from the nature of the office which you have undertaken. The ministers of the

gospel are 'ambassadors of Christ, to exhort and pray the people in his stead to be reconciled to God:' they are 'overseers of the flock,' and bound to 'feed the church of God,' which he hath purchased with his own blood: they are 'ministers and stewards of the mysteries of God,' and it is required of them that they be found faithful: they are watchmen for the souls of those committed to their care, and must give account to Him who is ready to judge the quick and dead.

Tell me now which of these duties can be discharged by one who absents himself from his cure? Can you deliver the message of Christ, as his ambassador, to persons to whom you have no access? Can you oversee the flock, or feed the church, which you have forsaken? Can you dispense the mysteries of God to those whom you neither see nor speak to? Or can you watch for their souls, to whose persons, as well as to their spiritual wants, you are a stranger?

Attendance on the flock or people of Christ does so naturally follow from these descriptions of the pastoral office, that there could be no occasion to mention it as a distinct and particular duty. Were you to agree with a pilot to conduct a ship to the East Indies, it would be almost absurd to add, as a particular covenant, that he should reside in the ship during the voyage; since without it he could not possibly fulfil the essential part of the contract, of conducting the ship to port. The case is the very same in your office: when you accept of a cure, you are as much bound to reside among the people committed to your care, as the pilot is to abide in the ship which he has undertaken to manage and conduct: for this reason the canonists generally hold that residence is *jure divino naturali*, meaning that it is a duty deducible from the divine law by a natural and necessary consequence.

This duty, with respect to the substance of it, has been invariably the same in all times of the church: the essential part is a personal attendance on the discharge of the pastoral office: so far there has been no change. But the circumstances of the duty have varied according to the different settlements and provisions made for the preachers of the gospel in different times. In early times the clergy lived with their bishop in the city of the diocese, and were sent, as occasion required, to in-

struct the people in the country, and to administer the sacraments to them; and then their residence, with respect to the locality of it, was of equal extent with the diocese.

Since the dividing of dioceses into parishes, and the appointing a particular curate to every particular parish, the bounds of this duty have been contracted; and residence has been considered, in the law of the church, as the curate's personal attendance on the duties of his office within the limits of the parish, where the cure of souls is committed to him by the bishop.

Under this restriction, the provincial constitutions of the church, and the laws of the realm, consider residence as a perpetual duty; and every non-resident rector, or vicar of a parish, is *primâ facie* criminal in the eye of both laws, till he shows a legal dispensation to justify or excuse himself.

These dispensations create the whole difficulty of this case, and therefore I shall consider them particularly.

That the obligation to residence may be dissolved in some cases, there is no doubt: all infirmities, either of body or of mind, which totally disable an incumbent from performing his duty, are cases of this kind; for as residence is of no value but for the sake of performing the duty, it is of no consequence to the church and religion where the man resides, who is under an utter incapacity of doing any part of the parochial duty. Cases of this kind speak for themselves. But there are dispensations introduced and admitted by law, and which are supposed to be founded in the general consideration of the good of the church. I wish these dispensations had not, many of them, outlived the reasons on which they were introduced. Wherever that happens to be the case, it is a matter for every clergyman to consider whether he can, in good conscience, make use of a mere legal exemption to discharge himself of a duty to which he is bound by the strongest obligations? But this judgment must be left to yourselves, and the bishop's authority in the case must be considered as bounded by the rules of law. I will inquire therefore,

I. In what cases dispensations are grantable, and by whom.

II. On what conditions they are grantable.

The canon law has mentioned some cases in which the bishop

may dispense with residence; and it supposes others, referring them to the judgment and discretion of the bishop.

1. It allows of a dispensation for such as abide in some approved university for the study of divinity or canon law. This dispensation is limited in point of time, and not allowed to exceed five or six years; and the reason of granting it is a presumption that it will be for the benefit of the church and people to have the minister himself well instructed; and that his absence from his cure for a few years will be compensated by the ability he will then acquire to execute his office to the better edification of the people.

This being the reason on which this dispensation is grantable, it follows that no incumbent can with a good conscience make use of this exemption, unless he does *bonâ fide* pursue the end for which it is granted, by a close application to the study of his profession in the university where he resides.

This reason, introduced at first by the canon law, has been approved by the legislature of this kingdom; and 'scholars conversant and abiding for study, without fraud or covin, at any university within this realm, or without,' are excepted from the penalties of the 21st Hen. VIII. cap. 13.

This exception, so generally expressed, was soon abused; which occasioned the restrictions laid on it by the 28th of Hen. VIII. cap. 13.; by which act the privilege was confined to those that were under the age of forty years.

So that with respect to this point the statute has made no alteration at all, except restraining the grant to persons under forty years of age. For the statute 21 Hen. VIII. c. 13. enacts nothing new with respect to students in the university; and that of 28 Hen. VIII. cap. 13. having limited the general licences for studying in the university, has a clause to except all heads of houses and public officers, &c. from the said limitation. So that the persons thus excepted stand clear of the statutes, which leave them just where they found them, and subject to be called to residence, unless they have the ordinary's dispensation.

On both these statutes therefore it must be observed, and ought to be remembered, that they grant no licence of non-

residence to any person on any occasion: they were made to inforce residence, and are introductive of a new penalty on non-residence; from which new penalty certain persons, in the circumstances therein described, are exempted; but those persons, in the circumstances therein described, are liable still to ecclesiastical censures, unless they are dispensed with in the manner the law before and since the statutes requires. And this is a point in which many have been mistaken or willingly ignorant.

2. The canon law allows the service of the bishop to be a sufficient licence for non-residence. The necessary care and business of a diocese require that the bishop should have the assistance of one or more discreet clergymen; and since it is much easier to find a proper curate to serve a parish, than a proper person to advise and assist the bishop in the general care of the diocese, the law considers the person who abides with the bishop for these purposes, as more usefully employed than if he were confined to the care of one parish only. In this case therefore the good of the church is made the foundation of the dispensation.

This reason also is admitted in the statutes before-mentioned; and chaplains of archbishops and bishops, daily attending in their households, are exempted from the penalty of the act.

The statute has extended this exemption to other cases not expressly mentioned in the canon law, as to the chaplains of the nobility and great officers of the crown; though cases of this kind had usually been dispensed with before the act; which dispensations were founded on the general power, reserved to the bishop by the canon law, to dispense where there appeared to him to be *justa et rationabilis causa:* and since the virtue and example of great and potent families will necessarily have a great influence on the manners and religion of any country, it was thought reasonable to dispense with the personal attendance of an incumbent in his parish, whilst he was employed in teaching and instructing the younger parts of great families, and performing the offices of his function daily to all parts of it. So that these dispensations had for their end the general interest and good of religion in the kingdom.

That the exemption in the statute granted to the chaplains of

the nobility proceeds on the same views, is evident from the restriction under which the exemption is granted; for it extends not to all chaplains of the nobility in general, but to such only as 'are daily attending, abiding, and remaining in their honorable households;' and for so long time only, as 'such chaplains shall abide and dwell without fraud and covin in any of the said honorable households.'

The statute considers the service of the chaplain in the household of his lord as the only ground of the exemption; and it cannot be doubted but that such service only is meant as is proper and peculiar to the office of a chaplain. And therefore a mere retainer of a clergyman to be chaplain to a nobleman, unless he actually abides and dwells in the household, is no title to the exemption of the statute; and if one retained and titled chaplain abides in the household to do any other service, and not the service of a chaplain, it is not such an abiding as the statute intends, but is fraudulent and covinous.

I have spoken to this case more particularly, because it is a common case; and I hope all who plead this title to an exemption from residence, will consider whether they pursue the reason and meaning of the law. It will be but little comfort to screen themselves under the letter of the law, if they are condemned by the reason of the law and their own conscience.

3. The service of the church is another reason taken notice of by the canon law; as attendance, for instance, in convocation. The statute does not mention this, neither has it, I conceive, condemned it; for he is not *wilfully* absent from his cure, (as the statute speaks,) who is absent in obedience to the king's writ.

4. The service of the crown is, by the common law, a dispensation of residence; but it is so only during the time a clerk is actually in the king's service; and the statute before-mentioned has exempted even the king's chaplains from the penalty of non-residence, so long only as they shall be attending in the household.

These are the principal cases in which non-residence is excusable by the canon law and the laws of this realm; and it is manifest from the reason of these cases, that a dispensation for residence is by no law permitted to be granted as a favor to

any person, and that it is only to be justified when the service of the church or the commonwealth make it reasonable.

This general observation on the cases which the law has expressly provided for, will enable us to judge of the cases not expressly provided for by the law, but reserved to the discretion of the bishop.

5. The canon law admits the bishop to dispense with residence where there is *justa et rationabilis causa*. In all cases provided for by the law itself, the *justa et rationabilis causa* is the good either of church or state; and we may be sure the laws never intended the bishop should grant such dispensations, but for reasons of the like nature, or in cases of great necessity. Dispensations of this kind never were fit to be asked as favors of the bishop, nor had he power to grant them as favors; but was bound to direct his judgment as the cause appeared to be *justa et rationabilis*, or otherwise.

That the bishops had and exercised this power in the church of England, is manifest from many instances remaining in the registers of the several dioceses, and the authority of Lyndwood, who makes the bishop's licence to be necessary in all cases: his words, speaking of the rectors of parishes, are: *si sine licentia non residerent—contra eos procedi posset secundum exigentiam jurium in ea parte statutorum.*

But the great question is, how this matter now stands since the statute of the 21st Hen. VIII.

By the words of this statute, 'all licences or dispensations obtained at the court of Rome, or elsewhere, by any persons to be non-resident contrary to the act, are declared to be void and of none effect; and every person putting such dispensation in execution is subject to a penalty of twenty pounds.'

The enacting part of this statute requires that every archdeacon, dean, dignitary, parson, and vicar, be constantly resident in, at, and on his dignity or benefice; and in case he has a plurality, that he shall at least be resident on one of his dignities or benefices.

Then follows the penalty for non-residence. And in the next clause all dispensations contrary to the act are declared void.

Had the act stopped here, all dispensations of residence had been intirely taken away.

But the act goes on, and makes the exceptions which I have already mentioned, for persons employed in the king's service, or as chaplains to bishops or temporal lords, or great officers of the crown; for scholars studying at the university and the like; and a provision there is for the king to give licence for non-residence to his own chaplains.

By the common law the service of the king, so long as the service continues, is a dispensation of residence; and the king, as supreme ordinary, could give licence for non-residence in other cases: the rights are preserved to the crown, but under this limitation, that a licence from the king is restrained to his own chaplains only.

If this act has restrained this power in the crown, without doubt it has restrained it in all inferior ordinaries. But it must be observed that the act itself grants no dispensation to any person in any case; and therefore the persons exempted by the act from the penalties of it, cannot justify non-residence merely by pleading the act; but they must justify it by a dispensation from the ordinary, and by showing that the dispensation is not contrary to the act: were it otherwise, the law must be supposed to leave every man to judge in his own case, and to dispense with himself, which I suppose no law ever did. The cases therefore excepted in the act are cases left open to dispensation, and stand just as they did before the act; and this is clear from the words of the statute, which does not take away all dispensations, but such only as are contrary to the statute; so that dispensations not contrary to the statute are left as they were. There are many cases not provided for in the statute, which must in all reason and equity be considered as excuses for non-residence. If a man taken sick at a distance from home should be unable to return within a month, or if it should be judged necessary for him to remove for the recovery of health; in these and the like cases the statute has been and always will be construed so as to be made consistent with the common rules of justice and equity.

There is one case in which dispensations are frequently ap-

plied for, and ought to be mentioned. It is the case of vicars, who are bound by oath to perpetual residence: in the form of the oath provision is made for the bishop to dispense. Now for any absence not exceeding a month at once, and two months in a year taken together, (which is the statutable allowance,) the bishop's dispensation to the vicar is, I conceive, to all intents effectual, as not being contrary to the statute. If the dispensation goes farther, it is certainly void, considered as a dispensation for residence; but the particular obligation of the oath laid on by the canon may, I think, be dispensed with by the bishop, it being the condition implied in the oath; and no oath obliges farther or to more than is understood to be the meaning of it by the imposer and the taker of the oath. The dispensation with the oath in this case arises therefore *ex vi compacti:* it removes only the particular obligation of the oath, and does not interfere with the authority of the statute; for I see no ground to suppose that the statute has made the oath to be absolute, which is always given and taken with a condition.

But with respect to this oath enjoined by the canon to be taken by vicars, I meet with a very common opinion, and for which I never yet could hear a reason, that the duty of residence is not the same in the case of a rector of a parish as in the case of a vicar. If we consider this case in theory, it is impossible to imagine a reason that could incline the governors of the church to require less duty from a rector than from a vicar. Is it because he has a better maintenance and larger income, that therefore he should do less duty? Are not all priests, whether ordained to the title of a rectory or to the title of a vicarage, called to the performance of the same duty, and bound by the same solemn engagement to the faithful discharge of it? Look into the office of ordination: do not all priests, whether called to be rectors or vicars, promise to "give faithful diligence always to minister the doctrine and sacraments and discipline of Christ, and to teach the people committed to their care and charge with all diligence to keep and observe the same?"—and likewise—"to use public and private monitions, as well to the sick as to the whole, within their cures, as need shall require and occasion shall be given?" Do they not solemnly promise "to set forward gentleness, peace, and love among

all Christian people, and especially among those who shall be committed to their charge?" The church having then required these duties from all her priests equally, and particularly required of them to discharge these duties in their respective cures, and among the people committed to their charge; on what ground can it be supposed that the church should think constant residence necessary for the discharge of these duties in a vicar, but not equally necessary in a rector, though both have the same duty, and are put under the same engagements?

As it is impossible, in the reason and nature of the thing, to find any ground for such difference in the case of a rector, and in the case of a vicar, so neither is there any pretence for such difference, either from the ecclesiastical or temporal laws of this kingdom: all canons, all statutes, relating to residence, do affect all incumbents equally, without considering whether they are rectors or vicars.

The 47th canon of 1603 has this title: 'The absence of beneficed men to be supplied by curates that are allowed preachers.'

Look into the canon and see who they are who may be absent from their livings: you will find nothing there of this supposed privilege of rectors; but you will find that no "beneficed man whatever can be absent from his benefice without a licence, according to the laws of the realm, on urgent occasion of other service:" so that every beneficed man is by law bound to continual residence, unless on urgent occasion, and such as the law allows, he has a licence to be absent.

Indeed the ancient canons relating to the residence of the parochial clergy are older than the settlement of vicarages, which obtained here when appropriations grew frequent, and it became necessary to provide a remedy for the mischiefs that followed after them: these canons therefore, when they require strict continual residence, had no particular view to vicars, who were not then in being.

But this mistake has, I presume, arisen merely from a legatine constitution still in force, and observed in the practice of our church; in consequence of which every vicar at his institution takes an oath of perpetual residence, which is not required to be taken by rectors.

But to argue from hence that rectors are not obliged to perpetual residence, because vicars are obliged to it by oath, is a strange way of reasoning, and applied to any other case would manifestly appear to be so. Suppose two men owed you each of them a hundred pounds, and you should trust one on his word or his note, and require a bond from the other; would it follow that the man whose word you took owed less than the man whose bond you required? The difference lies merely in the security given for discharge of the duty, but in the nature and extent of the duty itself there is no difference.

And if rectors consider the solemn engagements they are under at their ordination to exercise their function among the people who should be committed to their care, their oath of canonical obedience, together with the canons requiring their constant residence on their cures, they will find themselves, I think, under no less obligation to personal residence than the vicars are.

But to clear up this matter once for all, I desire you to consider with me the original of the vicars' oath of residence; and you will find it was not introduced on a supposition that vicars are bound to a stricter residence than rectors, but on another occasion, and to prevent a great abuse of another kind.

The case was thus: in the council of Lateran held under Alexander III. in the year 1179, and likewise in another Lateran council held under Innocent III. in the year 1215, there were very strict canons made against pluralities. By the first of these councils pluralities are restrained, and every person admitted *ad ecclesiam, vel ecclesiasticum ministerium,* is bound *residere in loco et curam per seipsum exercere.* By the second of these councils, if any person having one benefice with cure of souls accepts of a second, his first is declared void *ipso jure.* These canons were received in England, and are still part of our ecclesiastical law.

At the first appearance of these canons, there was no doubt made but they obliged all rectors; for they, according to the language of the law, had churches in title, and had *beneficium ecclesiasticum;* and of such the canons spoke. But vicars did not look on themselves to be bound by these canons; for they,* as the

* Decret. lib. i. tit 28. c. 3. verb. removere.

gloss on the decretals speaks, had not *ecclesiam quoad titulum*; and the text of the law * describes them, not as having benefices, but as bound *personis et ecclesiis deservire*, that is, as assistant to the rector in his church.

On this notion a practice was founded and prevailed in England, which eluded the canons made against pluralities. A man beneficed in one church could not accept another without voiding the first; but a man possessed of a benefice could accept a vicarage under the rector in another church; for that was no benefice in law, and therefore not within the letter of the canon, which forbids any man's holding two benefices.

The way then of taking a second living in fraud of the canon was this: a friend was presented, who took the institution, and had the church *quoad titulum:* as soon as he was possessed, he constituted the person vicar for whose benefit he took the living, and by consent of the diocesan allotted the whole profit of the living for his portion, except a small matter reserved to himself.

This vicar went and resided on his first living, for the canon reached him where he had the benefice; but having no benefice where he had only a vicarage, he thought himself secure against the late canons requiring residence.

This piece of management gave occasion to the papal decrees and the provincial constitutions relating to the residence of vicars; and one would imagine, by what appears in the decretals and in our own provincial constitutions, that this piece of fraud was peculiar to England: for all the decretals relating to the residence of vicars, and making vicarages incompatible with other cures, are directed to English bishops, and relate to cases which happened in this kingdom, as may be seen in the Decretals under the title *de Officio Vicarii*. And in point of time these decretals followed close after the council of Lateran before-mentioned, where the canons against pluralities were made.

About the same time our provincial constitutions take notice of this abuse. Archbishop Langton in 1222 ordained, in a council of his province, that no bishop should admit any one

* Decret. lib. i. tit. 28. c. 2.

to a vicarage, *nisi velit in ecclesiâ, in quâ ei vicaria conceditur, personaliter ministrare.*

But the abuse still continued, notwithstanding these papal decrees and provincial constitutions; and therefore Otho, who was legate here from the pope, in a council held before him in 1237, and 22nd of Henry III. applied a stronger remedy; ordaining that no one should be admitted to a vicarage unless he first resigned all other benefices with cure of souls, if he had any; *ac juret residentiam facere, ac eam faciat continuè corporalem.* It is on the authority of this constitution, that the oath of residence is administered to vicars to this day.

The reason for obliging vicars to resign other benefices with cures, and to take an oath of residence, is expressed in the constitution itself; and it was to exclude the fraud then common in practice, by which the canons against pluralities were avoided.—*Sicque illudatur illi dolo, quo sæpe, assignato alicui nomine personatus aliquo modico, simulate dabatur alii ecclesia ficto nomine vicariæ; qui timens alia perdere beneficia, metuebat eam recipere ut persona:* that is, as J. de Athon explains it, they took the profits as pretended vicars, well knowing that, if they took them as parsons or rectors, their former benefices would be void by the council.

From this account it is very plain that the canons enjoining residence, and an oath of residence to vicars, had no view to oblige vicars to more residence than rectors were bound to; but whereas vicars thought themselves not at all obliged by the canons of residence, as not having benefices or titles in their churches, the new constitutions were made to bring them under the canons of residence, as well as parsons and rectors, and not to impose another and different duty on them.

There are some cases which the law does not suppose, and therefore has made no provision for them; in which it is hard to know what the bishop may equitably require of the clergy, and what the clergy are strictly bound to perform. First, some livings have neither house nor glebe belonging to them; and perhaps no convenient houses or lodgings are to be had within the district of such parishes: and, secondly, in some parishes the glebe houses are mere cottages, and so extremely mean, as not to afford even tolerable conveniences to the rector and his

family. The question is, what is to be done in these cases? How shall the minister reside, who has no house, and can hire no house in his parish? The law does not bind to impossibilities; and therefore my Lord Coke, in the sixth Report, Butler and Goodal's case, says that the want of a house is an excuse for non-residence; for *impotentia excusat legem.* Whether this opinion be law, and how far the reason of it will go, shall be considered presently.

Originally, as is well known, the bishop and his clergy lived together, and had one common maintenance arising from the oblations of the people, which were distributed by the bishop, or those appointed by him, according to the rules laid down in the ancient canons: and in what part of the diocese soever a presbyter was by order of his bishop, he was, properly speaking, resident on his cure; for residence then was relative to the whole diocese, as it is now to particular parishes, since the state of church discipline has in this respect been altered by the division of a diocese into parishes: and therefore the ancient canons, which forbid the clergy to move from church to church without consent of the bishop, mean no more than that a clergyman should not forsake the bishop and the diocese where he received ordination: and the word parish, in old canons, is used to signify a diocese, as appears by the injunctions given to bishops not to invade the parishes of each other.

You will observe from this account that the relation which the clergy had to their bishop, and to the people recommended to their care, did not depend on their having houses among the people to whom they were to preach. They went from the mother church to the distant parts of the diocese to discharge their duty, and provided conveniences for themselves for the time they stayed, as other travellers might do: and should all the glebe houses in a diocese happen to be destroyed, the duty of the clergy would surely be the same that it was before any such houses were erected.

Let us consider then, in the next place, how this case stood on the division of the dioceses into parishes.

As Christianity spread and believers multiplied, the old method was found very inconvenient; and therefore great en-

couragement was given to all lords of manors, and other great people, to erect churches for themselves and tenants on their own lands; and for this purpose the bishop yielded part of his right to such founders, permitting them to name a person to serve the living, provided he was well qualified; the judgment of which the bishop reserved to himself: and this was the origin of lay patronages. But as it was highly convenient, and for the due performance of the parochial duty necessary, that a fixed curate should have a fixed habitation, it was made a condition of such foundations, that a manse and glebe should be provided for the curate, that is, a house and a proper portion of glebe land for the better support of himself and family, over and above the tithes and oblations: and it appears both in the laws of the church and empire, that a parochial church could not be erected, at least not consecrated, till this provision was made.

Now this change in the outward face of the diocese was necessarily followed by a change of discipline. The clergy hereby contracted a nearer relation to the inhabitants of their several parishes, and in great measure lost that general relation which they had to the people of the whole diocese: and the bishop had a right to exact from the parochial clergy a strict residence, and a constant performance of duty in their several parishes; but he had no longer a right to require their service in any other part of the diocese.

There is another very material thing to be observed on this case; for this change introduced also into the law of the church a new notion of residence, which we must particularly attend to in order to clear the present question; I mean the legal notion of residence, which implies living and abiding, not only in the parish, but in the very glebe house itself: so that by the law at this day a man may live constantly in his parish, and yet be liable to many penalties of non-residence, if he does not live in the very glebe house. I call this the legal notion of residence; for without all doubt, in the reason of the thing, the living in one house within the parish is as much residence as living in another, and may as well answer all the purposes of religion and ecclesiastical discipline. But this legal residence stands on a reason of its own, and a very good one it is: for as the laws of the church and state made it necessary for

the founders of churches to provide houses for the ministers, so it was but equitable to make it necessary for the ministers to maintain the houses in constant repair; and the surest way to effect it was to oblige them to live in their own houses, and not leave them at liberty to hire convenient habitations for themselves, and to let out the glebe houses to poor indigent tenants, which could end in nothing but suffering the buildings to run to decay and ruin: and for this reason the Court of King's Bench, 40 Elizabeth, determined that the residence required by the statute of 21 Hen. VIII. was a residence in the parsonage house;* "for the statute requires residence not only for serving the cure and for hospitality, but also for maintaining the houses, for the habitation not only of the present incumbent, but of his successors also;" which is the reason given by the court. And therefore when my Lord Coke says that the want of a house excuses residence, he means only this legal residence: and so far it is certain, that if a person has not a glebe house, he cannot live in one. He can consistently mean nothing else; and if he does, his opinion is not an authority in this case: for the want of a house will not discharge the obligations which the minister of every parish has voluntarily undertaken, and which must require residence in the natural and proper sense of the word.

You see then from this account that there are two kinds of residence, one implied in the very nature of the office, another introduced by positive law. There wants no law to declare or to enjoin the necessity of residence in the case of a minister of a parish, in the first sense, any more than there wants a law to declare that a pilot should attend the ship: the very nature of the office is a law in both cases, and carries with it the highest obligation. This residence, before the division of dioceses into parishes, had relation to the whole diocese, and was limited to one part or another by special direction from the bishop; so that a clergyman was in those days obliged to perform the function of his office in such part of the diocese, and for such time, as the bishop thought proper.

Consider then how the case stands now with respect to those

* Butler and Goodal's case.

who have no glebe houses. They are certainly appointed by the bishop to take care of their particular parishes, and are in this respect under the same obligation to residence that the clergy anciently were before the division of parishes; with this only difference, that formerly the clergy were moveable from one part of the diocese to another, whereas now they are fixed to one parish, and cannot be removed without their own consent: but this made no difference in the obligation. Besides, every clergyman who is instituted to a parish cure, does voluntarily undertake the office, and binds himself to perform it: the want of a convenient habitation may be a reason to refuse the living; but the inconvenience which they willingly submitted to when they took the living, can never be pleaded afterwards as a just excuse for neglect of the duty which they willingly undertook at the same time. Where there is no glebe house, the legal residence is dispensed with; and where it really happens to be the case that no house or lodging can be conveniently had within the parish, for the same reason residence within the limits of the parish is dispensed with also: but still the general obligation to a personal discharge of the parochial duty remains; and the bishop has a right, in all ordinary cases, to require from every incumbent that he performs the duty accordingly. How near he shall live to his parish cannot perhaps be determined by the ordinary, but must be left to the conveniences which the country affords, and the good conscience of the incumbent. And whoever considers the office he has undertaken, will find that good conscience obliges him to place himself as conveniently as he can for the benefit of his people: and he who does so under these circumstances, is to be reputed a resident minister. And so the gloss on Cardinal Otho's Constitution (*de Institutione Vicariorum*) has determined: there it is said, "that if a vicar, who is bound by oath to residence, happens to have no house, yet he shall be reputed as resident, if he be so nigh situate to the parish, that the inhabitants thereof may conveniently have access to him as oft as the parishioners have need of his ministry, and so as on all requisitions he be ready to administer the sacraments within the parish."

As to the other case, where there are glebes and houses, but

the houses in a very mean condition, it differs very much from that already mentioned; for here the reason of the law, which requires strict residence, must be considered. The main thing aimed at by the law is the maintaining the houses in good repair; and if there are at present many mean glebe houses, I am afraid it has been chiefly owing to the neglect of this law. Had the clergy been always obliged to live in their own houses, they would at least have been duly repaired, and probably long before this much improved, and rendered convenient habitations. We see in places where this law has been observed, many houses improving daily by additional conveniences to them from time to time; but we must never expect to see any thing like this where the glebe houses are deserted by the incumbents, and let to poor miserable tenants.

But it is in vain to look back and to reflect what might have been done to prevent this mischief, which is now but too sensibly felt by many. It is of more consequence to consider what may be reasonably attempted towards retrieving this evil.

In strictness of law, wherever there is a glebe house, the incumbent is obliged to live in it; the law has no respect to the goodness or badness of the house: but in the condition things now are, it would be thought hard to drive a minister and his family to live in a wretched cottage, or to put him under the necessity of building a new house, to the ruin or impoverishment of himself and family. What then can be done? Ought the ordinary to suffer things to go on in the present course from bad to worse? Ought the clergy to desire it? What reason can any man give now to excuse himself from being put to charge in repairing his glebe house that will not be as strong or stronger in the mouth of his successor? The house perhaps has been long neglected, and you think it hard the expense should fall on you; but if you continue in the neglect, would not the case be still harder with those that come after you? So that the only question is, whether the present bad state of those houses ought to be a reason why the ordinary should let them fall quite. If not, there seems to be no other equitable means left to remedy the present evil but that prescribed by the injunctions of Edward VI. 1547, and by those of Queen Elizabeth 1559, to set aside a part of the revenue yearly for the re-

pairing the glebe house. The portion allotted to this purpose by these injunctions is a fifth part, which may in many cases perhaps be too great; but something of this sort, within the bounds of equity, should be done.

You may ask, perhaps, whether the ordinary can by law compel the incumbents to submit to this method? My answer is, that I think he cannot. An incumbent may say that he is not obliged to alter the state of the glebe house, or to add any thing to it; if he repairs it, he does all the law obliges him to. But consider on the other side, what answer the law has furnished the ordinary with: he may say, if you like the house as it is, you must live in it. And this condition, if accepted, will answer all purposes; but in many cases it would, I fear, be a greater hardship than allotting a reasonable portion of the revenue towards making a habitable house in time.

I want not to be told, and I am sorry it is so evident a case, that many of the clergy have so poor a subsistence for themselves and families, that they have nothing to spare from their daily maintenance, to be applied to the improvement of their livings. I wish it were in my power to increase the maintenance of such of the clergy; I am sure I never shall have the will to diminish it. But having mentioned this, give me leave to observe to you that probably the poorness of many livings is in a great measure owing to want of a convenient habitation for the incumbent within his parish; and that, being destitute of conveniences for gathering in his legal dues, he is often forced to compound for what he can get; and by this means moduses and prescriptions have grown on the church; and where they have, it is well if the parson, in lieu of the tithes of the parish, receives the tithe of his own dues. In many cases he receives much less.

All incumbents then, whether rectors or vicars, being thus obliged to continual residence, the law has provided for some extraordinary cases; and ordinaries have a power to dispense with residence in the cases and under the restrictions prescribed by the law. But such cases as the law has not specially provided for, must be left to the general reason of the thing and the judgment of the ordinary.

But supposing all circumstances to meet that may make it

reasonable and proper to grant a dispensation for residence, yet there are certain conditions annexed to the grant which must be observed.

Every beneficed man licenced not to reside on his benefice, must have a sufficient curate to supply his place. We need look no farther than the canons of 1603, to see that this is law; and I will suspect no man's judgment so far as to go about to prove it to be reason.

These curates must have sufficient ability to discharge the duty; and

Sufficient maintenance to support them in it.

In both these cases the ordinary is made the judge. And if it will be of any service to you to know my opinion in these cases, I will in general declare that I can think no man fit to be admitted a curate, against whom there would be a proper objection, if he came for institution: the reason is, because he is to perform the same duty that a person instituted is to perform.

As to maintenance, it ought to be, what it is called, such an allowance as a man may live on, without being driven to seek help from methods unbecoming his profession.

It sometimes happens that a curate is employed to serve two parishes; a case never to be admitted but on evident necessity, as bringing great reproach on the clergy, and necessarily introducing a great neglect of religious service in the country. When a man who has a good living leaves it himself, and puts in one of these half-curates to supply his absence, what can the people think, but that their minister has no regard to any thing but the cheapness of his curate? And when churches are thus half attended, and are deprived either of the morning or evening service, the people of the parish who are religiously disposed, will probably go to the meeting-house if there be one near; those who are not religiously disposed will probably go to the ale-house. And with what face can we complain of the people for neglecting the service of the church, when the service itself is neglected by those whose duty it is to see it performed? This is an evil that must be remedied.

The 48th canon of 1603 has decreed, that "no man shall serve more than one church or chapel on one day, except that

chapel be a member of the parish church or united thereunto; and unless the said church or chapel, where such a minister shall serve in two places, be not able in the judgment of the bishop or ordinary to maintain a curate."

Here are two exceptions; of which the first speaks for itself, the second is referred to the judgment of the bishop. I do therefore expect to be consulted in this case, and that all who think themselves intitled to the benefit of this exception in the canon, do lay their reasons before me.

Where a resident minister wants a curate for his assistance, I should be less inquisitive in both respects, relying on the ability of an experienced incumbent to advise and instruct his curate, and his hospitality to support him.

All incumbents, whether resident or non-resident, are bound to uphold and maintain their houses; but there will be particular reason to inquire into the condition of the houses that belong to those who are legally dispensed with from residing. I need give you no reason for this: common experience in the case calls for this care, and will justify it.

I have now gone through what I proposed to say on this head. I have been the more particular, that I might show you not only the rule of your duty, but the rule of my own also. It will always be a pleasure to me to assist, with the utmost of my power, the meanest clergyman in the diocese in the discharge of his duty. Where it is reasonable to dispense with any man's constant and personal attendance on his cure, the terms of the law must be pursued; beyond which there is nothing for any clergyman to ask, nothing for any bishop to grant.*

* It is scarcely necessary to say that the laws relating to the residence of the clergy were all revised, consolidated, and amended in an act of parliament passed in the 57th year of the reign of George III.; but it may be useful to remark that the provisions of that act are all clearly stated in Mr. Hodgson's excellent work, intitled "Instructions to the Clergy," &c.; and that an excellent abstract of the act, with a commentary on it, forms the subject of Bishop Marsh's Primary Charge to the clergy of Llandaff.—Ed.

SUMMARY.

THE relation in which the writer stands to the inhabitants of these great cities, mentioned as a daily call on him to consider their spiritual state. It is the duty of every man, and of him in particular, to pay attention to all the warnings which God in his mercy sends to a sinful people. Such a warning has been given by two great shocks of an earthquake. Thoughtless or hardened sinners may be deaf to these calls, and little philosophers may think they see enough to account for what happens, without calling in a special providence; but let their imaginations be to themselves; the subject is too serious, and calls us off to other views.

If we consider God's general government of the world, or recollect the examples made by the divine power in sacred or profane history, and then refer our own case to either for comparison, we shall soon discover whether there be any just cause for apprehension: these points enlarged on.

Exhortation of the writer to the people that they would attend to him with patience, not as an accuser, but as their faithful minister in Christ, warning them to flee from the wrath to come.

If this part of the world had less light and less knowlege, they might have some excuse; but they have had the light and loved darkness; they have had the gospel, and the promised aid of the Holy Spirit, &c.; but all has been rejected and treated with scorn: evil influence of the press in its attacks on religion noticed.

No great sagacity was required to foresee what would be the consequence of the pains taken to unsettle all the principles of religion. Infidelity and immorality are too nearly allied to be long separated.

The case of the people in this respect dilated on, and a catalogue of their enormous vices given. And even if the case be not so bad as it is here represented, yet it is a very unhappy thing that cause should exist for suspicion that such vices are common.

But to go one step farther: men, not content with indulging their own brutish passions, have taken pains to corrupt others, and have acted with such diabolical malice, as seems to challenge the power and justice of God: instances given.

Is it to be wondered at, after so much labor and pains taken to corrupt the religion and morals of the people, that they should be indisposed to attend to any thing serious, or that they should grow sick of religion, which has no comforts for them, and fly from the church to the playhouse and all other places of diversion?

How far this spirit of indolence and idleness has gone, may be seen in all orders: this point enlarged on.

A great and grievous evil in the nation, which naturally springs from the disorders above mentioned, is the great increase of popery. When men have lost all principles of religion and all sense of morality, they are prepared to receive any sort of superstition, especially when the decay of health or the accidents of life revive the fears of futurity.

Exhortation to the people to lay these things together, with whatever else their own observation and reflexion may suggest; and then let them ask their hearts whether they have not reason to fear that God will visit them for these things. If so, let it be remembered that the *long sufferance of God is a call to repentance.*

It is purely for the sake of this reflexion that the writer addresses himself to them; for he has no pleasure in laying open the shame of his country, and exposing the vices of those in particular over whom he has a charge.

They are exhorted however not to despair: there is still one remedy left; and whatever reason they may have to condemn themselves, God has not *forgotten to be gracious.* To him then let them turn with hearty repentance for their sins, and with a resolution to do, each in his proper station, what lies in their power to stem that torrent of iniquity which threatens to ruin all.

Exhortation to the clergy, who share with the writer the care of souls in these populous cities, to speak to the people, and *persuade them as knowing the terrors of the Lord.*

Similar exhortation to those who are intrusted with the government of them: it is time for them to awake, and to let the people once more know, what seems to be almost forgotten, that laws are made for the punishment of wickedness and vice, and for the maintenance of true religion.

Government is a great trust; and its powers are not merely intended to honor those who possess them; but they must be used for the good of the community: this subject enlarged on.

Next to those in public offices of power and trust, the happiness of the country depends on such as have the government in private families. Here it is that the youth of the nation must be formed; and if they are suffered to be corrupted in religion or morals before they come into the world, there is little hope that the world will reform them. Bad education of the children of this realm: the effects of it in all orders pointed out. Exhortation to fathers and mothers to exert themselves: their endeavors may go a great way in saving the nation.

Exhortation to every man, whatever his station may be, to do his part towards averting the judgments of God: let every

one reform himself, and others, as far as his influence goes: this is the only remedy.

To these personal endeavors let there be added continual and fervent prayers to the Almighty, that he would *spare us, and not deal with us after the multitude of our sins.* Conclusion.

It is purely for the sake of this reflexion that the writer addresses himself to them; for he has no pleasure in laying open the shame of his country, and exposing the vices of those in particular over whom he has a charge.

They are exhorted however not to despair: there is still one remedy left; and whatever reason they may have to condemn themselves, God has not *forgotten to be gracious.* To him then let them turn with hearty repentance for their sins, and with a resolution to do, each in his proper station, what lies in their power to stem that torrent of iniquity which threatens to ruin all.

Exhortation to the clergy, who share with the writer the care of souls in these populous cities, to speak to the people, and *persuade them as knowing the terrors of the Lord.*

Similar exhortation to those who are intrusted with the government of them: it is time for them to awake, and to let the people once more know, what seems to be almost forgotten, that laws are made for the punishment of wickedness and vice, and for the maintenance of true religion.

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To these personal endeavors let there be added continual and fervent prayers to the Almighty, that he would *spare us, and not deal with us after the multitude of our sins.* Conclusion.

A LETTER

FROM THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON TO THE CLERGY AND PEOPLE OF LONDON AND WESTMINSTER, ON OCCASION OF THE EARTHQUAKES IN 1750.

MY BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

THE relation I stand in to you is a daily call on me to consider the spiritual state of these great cities; and though I doubt not but God has many faithful and chosen servants among you, yet the general view of the wickedness and corruption that abound and are spreading far and wide, gives me, and must give to every serious Christian, very painful reflexions. It is hardly possible to think of the history of Providence recorded in Holy Writ, and the many examples of divine justice exercised, sometimes in punishing, sometimes in utterly destroying wicked nations or cities, without being sensibly affected with apprehensions for ourselves; but more especially have we reason to fear, when we see the 'beginning of sorrows,' and the displeasure of the Almighty manifested in the calamities we suffer under, and in the signs and tokens given us to expect a far more dreadful judgment.

It is every man's duty, and it is mine to call on you, to give attention to all the warnings which God in his mercy affords to a sinful people: such warning we have had by two great shocks of an earthquake; a warning which seems to have been immediately and especially directed to these great cities and the neighborhood of them; where the violence of the earthquake was so sensible, though in distant parts hardly felt, that it will be blindness wilful and inexcusable not to apply to ourselves this strong summons from God to repentance.

Thoughtless or hardened sinners may be deaf to these calls;

and little philosophers who see a little and but very little into natural causes, may think they see enough to account for what happens, without calling in the aid and assistance of a special providence; not considering that God, who made all things, never put any thing out of his own power, but has all nature under command to serve his purposes in the government of the world. But be their imaginations to themselves; the subject is too serious for trifling, and calls us off to other views.

If we consider the general government of the world by God, and on what reasons and motives he acts when he brings calamities and plagues on any people; or if we recollect from history sacred and profane, what state and condition with respect to religion and morality the people were in who have been examples of justice, and then compare our own case with the general reason by which Providence acts, and with the circumstances of those by whose example we ought to take warning, we shall soon discover whether there be just reason for our apprehensions. If those who have been destroyed by fire from heaven, or swallowed up by the earth, were sinners, and we are righteous, let us fear nothing, nor be dismayed though the foundations of the earth be removed; but if our consciences tell us that we have sinned after their example, what consolation is there to be had against the just expectation of suffering after their example also?

The same conclusion will arise from a contemplation of God's general providence; which, though it is not daily exerted in punishing all men or all vices that deserve it, yet is always armed with power to stop outrageous wickedness; and he has told us in his holy word what we may expect from his justice, when we are grown hardened and obdurate against his mercy.

On these principles let your own case be examined: but who shall be your accuser? Shall I? God forbid! My heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may be saved. Hear me then with patience, not as your accuser, but as your faithful servant and minister in Christ Jesus, warning you to flee from the wrath that is to come.

Had this part of the world had less knowlege and less light, they might have some excuse, and some hope that God would wink at the times of their ignorance; but they have had the

light, and have loved darkness: the gospel of Christ, in which all the goodness and mercy of God are displayed through the redemption purchased by the blood of Christ; in which the aid and comfort of the Holy Spirit of God is offered to all who diligently seek it; in which the hopes and fears of eternity are displayed to guard us against the temptations of sin; has been not only rejected, but treated with a malicious scorn; and all our hopes in Christ represented as delusions and impositions on the weakness of men. How has the press for many years past swarmed with books, some to dispute, some to ridicule the great truths of religion, both natural and revealed. I shall mention no particular cases, there is no need for it; the thing is notorious. I wish the guilt in this instance was confined to the authors only, and that nobody else was answerable for it; but the earnestness with which these books were sought after, the pleasure and approbation with which they were received, are too strong indications of the general taste to be dissembled; and the industry used to disperse these books at home and abroad, and especially to our plantations in America, to which great numbers, and at a great expense, have been conveyed; are proofs of such malice against the gospel and the holy Author of it, as would not be borne even in a Mahometan country. In this branch of trade this great city beats all the world; it is become even the mart for infidelity.

It required no great sagacity to foresee what the consequence would be of the pains taken to unsettle all principles of religion. Infidelity and immorality are too nearly allied to be long separated; and though some have pretended to preserve a sense of virtue without the aid of religion, yet experience has shown that people who have neither hopes nor fears with respect to another world, will soon abuse this by indulging the worst of their passions, and will not regard man when once they have learned to disregard God.

Whether this be our case let every man judge by what he hears and sees; by what indeed he must hear and see if he lives amongst us. Blasphemy and horrid imprecations domineer in our streets, and poor wretches are every hour wantonly and wickedly calling for damnation on themselves and others, which may be (it is much to be feared) too near them already. Add

to this the lewdness and debauchery that prevail amongst the lowest people, which keeps them idle, poor, and miserable, and renders them incapable of getting an honest livelihood for themselves and families; the number of lewd houses which trade in their vices, and which must at any rate be paid for making sin convenient to them; and it will account for villanies of another kind, which are growing so fast as to be insupportable and almost incurable: for where is the wonder that persons so abandoned should be ready to commit all sorts of outrage and violence? A city without religion can never be a safe place to dwell in.

The unnatural lewdness of which we have heard so much of late is something more than brutish, and can hardly be mentioned without offending chaste ears, and yet cannot be passed over intirely in silence, because of the particular mark of divine vengeance set on it in the destruction of Sodom by fire from heaven. Dreadful example!

But these vices are so enormous that it is to be hoped the generality of our people are not guilty; I hope in God they are not, I trust they are not. But how unhappy is it for this country that there should be any ground even for suspicion that these vices are growing to be common!

But to go one step farther—

When men, not content with indulging their own brutish passions, take pains to corrupt others, they act with such cool and diabolical malice as outdoes former examples, and seems to be a challenge to the power and justice of God. Have not all the abominations of the public stews been opened to view by lewd pictures exposed to sale at noon-day? Have not histories or romances of the vilest prostitutes been published, intended merely to display the most execrable scenes of lewdness? lewdness represented without disguise, and nothing omitted that might inflame the corrupt passions of the youth of the nation! What was the encouragement for men to dare giving such an affront not only to the common sense but to the common law of the country? Was it not the quick sale these pictures and these books had? And is not this a deplorable circumstance, and sad instance of the corrupt disposition of many among us?

Is it to be wondered at, after so much pains taken to corrupt the religion and morals of the people, that they should be indisposed to attend to any thing serious, or that they grow sick of religion, which has no comforts for them; that they fly from the church and crowd to the playhouse; that they are tired of themselves and their own thoughts, and want to lose themselves in company from morning to night? It is this unhappy unsettled state of mind that has introduced a kind of general idleness among the people, and given rise to almost infinite places of diversion in and about this town: it were well if they were places of diversion only; but they are often places for carrying on worse business, and give opportunities to the profligate to seduce the innocent, who often meet their ruin where they only came for pleasure. While I was writing this, I cast my eye on a newspaper of the day, and counted no less than fifteen advertisements for plays, operas, music and dancing, for meetings at gardens, for cock-fighting, prize-fighting, &c. Should this paper (as many of our newspapers do) go abroad, what an idea must it give to all the churches abroad of the manner in which Lent is kept in this protestant country? What our Saviour said to the Jews on another occasion, 'You have turned the house of prayer into a den of thieves,' may with a little variation be applied to ourselves. We have turned this season appointed for serious reflexions and humiliation of body and spirit, into a time of mirth and jollity, of music, dancing, and riotous living.

How far this spirit of indolence and idleness has gone, and to what excess, may be seen in all orders among us; friendly visits for conversation are become insipid things, and are degenerated into meetings for gaming, where people hardly known to each other are invited by one tie only, the love of play, which seems now to be, not an amusement or diversion, but a serious business of life, and one would think a necessary one, by seeing how some children are trained up to it.

There is a great and a grievous evil among us, which naturally springs from the disorders before mentioned: I mean the great increase of popery in this kingdom. When men have lost all principles of religion, and are lost to all sense of morality, they are prepared to receive any superstition whenever the

decay of health, or the cross accidents of life revive the fears of futurity, which may be stifled, but cannot be extinguished: such persons not able to digest the wholesome food of repentance by which their spiritual condition might be gradually mended, greedily swallow the high cordial of absolution, which like other cordials gives some present ease, but works no cure. And with respect to people of a serious and religious turn of mind, the manifest and almost general contempt, or at least neglect, of the duties of religion gives a great advantage to the emissaries of Rome to impose on their weakness, and to persuade them that they can have no hopes in the religion of a church where religion itself is hardly to be found.

Lay these things together, and what more your own observation and reflexion may furnish, and much more they may furnish, and then ask your heart whether you have not reason to fear that God will visit for these things. If your heart misgives you, and forebodes the time of taking vengeance for these iniquities to be drawing near, consider farther, how graciously you have been dealt with by having had warning of your danger, and remember that the long 'sufferance of God is a call to repentance.'

It is purely for the sake of this reflexion that I now address myself to you: I have no pleasure in laying open the shame of my country, or in exposing its nakedness either to friends or to foes; and when I consider my own situation, it is a prospect void of all comfort to me to see the condition of the people over whom I have a charge; and, God knows my heart, these considerations are a pain and grief to my mind.

But let us not despair; there is still one remedy left, and whatever reason we have to condemn ourselves, yet of this we may be sure, that God has not 'forgotten to be gracious.' To him then let us turn with hearty repentance for our sins; and with a resolution to do, each of us in his proper station, what lies in our power to stem the torrent of iniquity which threatens our ruin.

As to you, my brethren of the clergy, who share with me the care of the souls in these populous cities, let me exhort you (though I trust you want not to be exhorted) to awaken the people, to call them from the lethargy in which they have too

long lived, and make them see their own danger. Speak to them, 'persuade them as knowing the terrors of the Lord.' Speak to their hearts and consciences with such plainness as becomes the ministers of the gospel; tell them in 'season and out of season,' that 'unless they repent, they must perish.' If the warnings we have had are a call on the people to repentance, remember they are still stronger calls on us, to preach repentance, and to discharge the duty we owe to God and his church, and to the flock of Christ, over whom we are placed. May this work of God prosper in our hands!

I should be wanting to the duty I owe to the highest as well as the lowest, should I omit on this occasion to remind those who are intrusted by their country with the government of these populous cities, how much the welfare of the people depends on the faithful execution of the law. I pretend not to accuse them particularly of neglect: a general neglect of this kind is one of the worst symptoms of the time; every man is left to do what is right in his own eyes; one would think 'there was no king in Israel.' Could the vile abominable pictures of lewdness have been offered to sale in the most frequented parts of the city; could books for the instruction of the inexperienced in all the mysteries of iniquity have been publicly cried in our streets; had not the laws and the guardians of the laws been asleep? But surely it is high time to awake, and to let people once more know (what seems to be almost forgotten) that laws are made for the punishment of wickedness and vice, and for the maintenance of true religion.

Government is a great trust, and the powers of it are not intended merely to do honor to those who have them, but must be used for the good of the community. This is a truth sufficiently known; it has been sounded in the ears of the nation without ceasing; but the misfortune is, that this doctrine has been applied so constantly to the supreme magistrate only, that those who have subordinate powers derived from his authority, forget, or are not accustomed, to make the application to themselves. And yet surely there is not a constable but has, in proportion to the power the law gives him, a trust reposed in him in behalf of his king and his country: those who are in higher

offices have still greater reason, as more depends on the due exercise of their authority, to be watchful for the community. The good of society must be influenced by their conduct and example one way or other. Great officers of justice cannot be useless without being pernicious.

If a regard for the public is not a motive strong enough in this case, let every magistrate consider that there is another of infinite importance to himself; for if all power be the ordinance of God, he will undoubtedly demand an account of the exercise of it; and who is he that has so little to answer for on his own account, as willingly to subject himself to be answerable for the sins of others, which either by his encouragement or his connivance he makes his own? Pardon the freedom of this address; I honor and reverence your office, and I hope I give you no occasion to despise mine.

Next to those in public offices of power and trust, the happiness of the public depends on those who have the government in private families. Here it is that the youth of the nation must be formed, and if they are suffered to be corrupted in their religion or morals before they come into the world, there is little hope that the world will reform them. All wise men, legislators, and princes, have acknowleged not only the use, but the necessity of an early education to form the mind, whilst tender, to the principles of honor and virtue; and what is more, the wisest of all, the writers inspired by the Holy Spirit, have required it as a duty from parents, and as part of the obedience they owe to God. Even our unbelievers have seen how far religion depended on this care; and under a pretence of maintaining the liberty of the human mind, and guarding it against early prejudices, they have endeavored to persuade the world that children should be taught nothing of religion, but be left to form notions for themselves. They have had but too great success, and we begin to see the fruits of it. The children of this age grow soon to be men and women, and are admitted to be partners and witnesses to the follies and vices of their parents. Thus trained and educated, when they come to be masters and mistresses of families, they answer fully what was to be expected from them; they are often a torment to each other

and to themselves, and have reason to bemoan themselves for the indulgence shown them in their early days.

Would you see the effects of this education in all orders among us, look into the many public assemblies; sometimes you may see old age affecting the follies of youth, and counterfeiting the airs of gaiety; sometimes men lying in wait to seduce women, and women to seduce men; and even children seriously employed at the gaming table, as if their parents were concerned to form them early to the taste of the age, and were afraid that they should not soon enough of themselves find the way to their ruin.

Look near home: see the temptations of this sort which surround these cities, and are indeed so many snares to catch your sons and daughters and apprentices. Can you look on and be unconcerned? For God's sake, and for the sake of your children and your country, take the courage to act like parents and masters of families: reformation must begin in private families; the law and the magistrate can punish your children when they become wicked; but it is you who must make them good by proper instruction and proper government. If you suffer them to meet temptation where temptation is sure to meet them, never complain of him who corrupts your child; you are the corrupter yourself; to you he owes it that he is undone. And perhaps there is not a more provoking circumstance, nor a greater call for divine vengeance on a wicked nation than this; that the youth are prepared and brought up to inherit all the vices of their fathers, which cuts off all prospect of reformation, and stands as a bar between us and mercy.

On you therefore, fathers and mothers, your country and the church of God call for assistance; your endeavors may go a great way towards saving us, and this wicked generation may be spared, for the hope of seeing the next better.

In a word, let every man, whatever his station is, do his part towards averting the judgments of God: let every man reform himself, and others as far as his influence goes: this is our only proper remedy; for the dissolute wickedness of the age is a more dreadful sign and prognostication of divine anger than even the trembling of the earth under us.

To our own endeavors, let us add continual and fervent supplications to the Almighty, that he would 'spare us, and not deal with us according to the multitude of our sins;' that he would give us the grace of repentance, and open our eyes to see, before it is too late, the 'things which belong to our salvation.'

May the God of all mercy hear you in this day of your distress! To his protection, and the grace of our Lord Jesus I earnestly recommend you. I am,

Your affectionate brother, and

Servant in Christ Jesus,

THOMAS LONDON.

SUMMARY.

NOTICE taken of the bishop's complaint of having been unhandsomely treated by Dr. Snape and the committee of the Lower House of Convocation. He charges them with exposing him, vilifying him, and using him as they pleased. Refutation of the charge of exposing him, in all improper senses of the word; wherein particular notice is taken of the true and the false notion of prayer, as expressed by his lordship. Charge of vilifying him next repelled; nothing having been alleged against him but his own words. Answer to the charge of using him as they pleased, in which it is shown that his lordship makes use of a term which is at once a charge and a defiance, highly indecorous to be used towards a court of judicature like the Convocation. Notice taken of the *Preservative*, a book written by the bishop against the principles and practices of the non-jurors. Strictures on its title-page, which, by an insertion of the words, *an appeal to the conscience and common sense of the laity*, would imply that the clergy are deficient in both those qualities. His lordship's six reasons for thus addressing the laity discussed. His opinion of the clergy may be disregarded, after his condemnation of all the ancient writers, bishops, and martyrs of the Christian church. Inquiry into the kind of entertainment which his lordship has provided for the common sense of the laity. His reasons for the support of the established church would not have been less weighty if they had been urged with more modesty. Certain expressions of the bishop, such as *comprehensive principles, wide and strong foundations, new-invented engine of courting some among us*, commented on, and

condemned in their use and application. The same and others ridiculed, under the notion of their being taken up and applied by Mr. Powel, at Bath, to the wooden heads of his *raree-show*. Consideration of the bishop's candid intimation that he suffers for his affection to the present establishment, and consequently that his opponents are disaffected to the government. Vindication of both Houses of Convocation. Reproach of the bishop for his treatment of his clerical brethren, in a passage of great eloquence. Consideration of his services done to the government, on which so much stress is laid. His method stated to be directly at variance with the true interests of government. Proposition laid down, " that it is the real interest of government to have all the people made easy in their submission and obedience to it; and that it is of no consequence to ask on what principles or views men come to be satisfied with it, provided they yield an intire and cheerful obedience." But the bishop endeavors to beat down all arguments for obedience except one, which is his own : all others are set aside to make room for his *comprehensive principles*. It is shown how he thus raises as courtly a doctrine out of his principles of *resistance*, as the most servile preacher of *passive obedience* ever did. His lordship's political writing having been thus exposed, it is next considered whether his divinity was conceived under better auspices, or is likely to be attended with better consequences. Consideration of the fears of the nation lest the fences of the establishment should be broken down. These fears instilled into their minds, and augmented by the joint efforts of Jacobites and dissenters, in order that the people might be shaken in their affection towards the government. Riotous assemblies, and destruction of the meeting-houses. Certain wise politicians ridiculed, who gravely judged that the people were really indignant against the Pretender, and that their zeal against the meeting-houses was but a pretence. The people's fears were, in fact, for the church. In this state of things the proper part of one

who loved his country, king, and church, would have been to allay these jealousies, and give the people a true account of the king's purposes to support the constitution in church and state. This not done by the bishop in any of his writings. On the contrary, he falls on the ministers of Christ, ridiculing their succession, ordination, &c. Receives praises for this from the enemies of the church. Inflated by them, he denies all power in the church or state to support religion; impeaches the act of uniformity, and the articles, &c.; thus adding fuel to the flames. To counteract this mischief was the proper business and duty of the Convocation. Conclusion.

REMARKS

ON THE LORD BISHOP OF BANGOR'S TREATMENT OF THE CLERGY AND CONVOCATION.

> Turno tempus erit, cum magno optaverit emptum
> Intactum Pallanta.—VIRG.

THE Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Bangor having been pleased, in his Answer to Dr. Snape's Letter, to complain of the unhandsome manner in which he has been treated, not only by the doctor, but by the Lower House of Convocation, or at least by the Committee, as his words are generally understood, and as, I presume, they will not be denied to mean; I think it proper to acquaint the world how little reason his lordship has to make this complaint with regard to the Lower House of Convocation, or the Committee appointed to draw the Representation; by showing that the manner his lordship was treated in was in no respect unhandsome; and supposing the manner to have been other than it was, yet that his lordship has no right to complain, having himself in his late performances used the whole clergy of this realm with the utmost scorn and contempt. Together with this, it will be proper to consider his lordship's candid insinuation, that he suffers in this matter for his affection to the present government; and consequently, that those who have treated him in the unhandsome manner complained of are disaffected to the present establishment, and act on other views.

The work I am now engaged in is so far from being pleasant, that I should not have entered on it but to do justice to the cause to which I am heartily a well-wisher, and which ought not to suffer in the opinion of the world because his lordship has a good talent of complaining, and knows how to inflame

the passions of his admirers by persuading them of his own meekness and ill usage.

The main complaint is to be found in page 41. "I have this satisfaction, that you come yourself into this whole condemnation; and not only you, but indeed all, and every man of the church of England; every man of those themselves who have treated me in the same unhandsome manner on this account." To know what manner his lordship means, we must have recourse to the words immediately preceding, "expose, vilify, use me as you please." If this complaint then relates to the Lower House of Convocation or the Committee, which cannot, I think, be disputed, his lordship's charge is, that they have exposed him, vilified him, and used him as they please; that is, in an arbitrary manner, without any regard to the justice or merit of his cause. That they have exposed his lordship may be true, and I believe it is; for his doctrine is become by this means very public in the world. But whose fault is this? Is it reasonable that a man should write what he pleases, and advance doctrines contrary to sense and reason, without control, merely because the calling him to account will expose his weakness or his ill meaning? If this be the case, his lordship's sermon ought not to have been examined; for the weaker any performance is, the more sacred it ought to be; because if it be meddled with, there is the more danger of exposing the writer.

To expose any man means, even in the language of the provoked, to make known the real weakness, folly, or wickedness, which were before not publicly known; which in private cases is often malicious, and contrary to the rules of honor and conscience; but in matters which affect the well-being of mankind with respect to their civil or religious rights, it is a duty to expose whatever or whoever aims at their destruction. If his lordship is innocent, and has done nothing tending this way, the Convocation has certainly exposed itself, which his lordship will not complain of; if he is not innocent, he may be exposed without any fault chargeable on the Convocation, which his lordship ought not to complain of.

But possibly his lordship may mean that in order to expose him they have misrepresented his sense, and charged him with

a meaning of which his words are not capable; and I the rather believe that his lordship has this view in his complaint, because I find him dropping something to this effect: "Sir, it is not only perhaps so, but certainly so; and this so certainly, that all your zeal and that of all your friends put together, and all your abilities likewise, cannot make the sentence capable of any other sense." Who these friends are, I should not perhaps have found out had not his lordship given us a key in the words which follow, "only your *Representation* —— is not wholly just:" where the word *representation* being printed in italic characters, and not referring to any peculiar use of the word in the doctor's letter, can only be meant to point out the friends who have united their endeavors to make his lordship's words appear to the world in a sense of which they are not capable. This reflexion is somewhat the harder, because it stands applied in an instance which the Convocation meddled not with expressly; and had not his lordship been in great haste to vent his anger and his disdain at once, he would have waited for an opportunity, till he had come to the points common to the Representation and the doctor's letter. Whether the Convocation is guilty or not in this particular, must be left to be determined by the issue of the controversy: that they took all possible care to do justice to his lordship's meaning is certain from all I have heard of this affair: if they have in any instance mistaken, they are the more excusable, because his lordship was so tender of his notion, so suspicious of the light, that his performance, at least as far as it regards the power of the church, is in itself a night-piece, perpetually shaded with *absolutely*, *properly*, *indispensably*, &c. which are laid on so thick, that it is not easy always to discern what is doing under the veil. But if his lordship is likely to meet with no better success in doing justice to his notions against the misrepresentations of the Convocation than he has had in this instance, to which he has tacked his defiance of all the doctor's friends; if I had the honor to be of his council, I would advise him to sit down by the injury and think no more of it. I shall not meddle with the point in debate between his lordship and the doctor. The doctor wants not the help of *all* or *any* of his friends to do justice to himself or

his lordship; or if he did, mine is not a proper hand to interpose in deep controversies; and therefore I beg leave only to observe how happily his lordship has stated his own sense in this particular.

Prayer was one of the words which his lordship made choice of to instance in, as having been abused to the perverting the true notion of the thing originally intended by it. The true notion he has expressed thus: "prayer is a calm and undisturbed address to God," &c. The false notion he has expressed thus: "the same word, by the help of men and voluminous rules of art, is come to signify heat and flame, in such a manner and to such a degree, that a man may be in the best disposition in the world, and yet not be devout enough to pray."

The difficulty here is to know what his lordship means by the 'manner' and 'degree' of 'heat' and 'flame,' which he condemns; and what, by 'the best disposition in the world,' so highly approved. The debate has produced his lordship's explication; and he tells us, in page 14. of the Answer, his design was "to guard honest Christians against the doctrines of men both in books and sermons; which, under the pretence of recommending fervency of prayer, lead their understandings into a dark and thick cloud, and teach them to raise their passions, till they know not where they are, nor what they are doing." This degree of flame he expresses by 'perturbation,' by 'agitation and disorder in the soul.' By 'calm and undisturbed,' his lordship professes to mean, "that calmness and undisturbedness of mind, which is the ornament and defence of human understanding in all the actions in which it is concerned." And who now can differ with his lordship, who only desires that men may retain the use of their understanding, when they perform their devotions? who has nothing to say against *any* flame, but what is "perturbation, agitation, and disorder in the soul:" that is in short, who only desires that men may be in their wits, (a very reasonable request,) when they perform their prayers. On this explication his lordship will admit, as proper to devotion, all heat and flame consistent with that calmness and undisturbedness which is the 'ornament and defence of human understand-

ing;' or if it be too much to expect any allowance to heat and flame directly, yet abate only that, and his lordship will be so good as to make it up another way, by allowing as much to fervency and warmth. His notion then of prayer is now cleared up, and his lordship shall be allowed to be orthodox (if he will pardon the imputation) whether he prints his private devotions or no; which I must own to his lordship is a very surprising method he has hit on to clear this point. The question is, what should be the temper of the mind in prayer? To clear it, his lordship will print his prayers: but may not different persons use the same words, and yet one pray with devotion and the other without it? And if so, how will this matter be ended by his lordship's printing the words he makes use of in prayer, unless he should print likewise the disposition of his mind in using them? His lordship may then print his prayers if he pleases; but I cannot allow that he has a just occasion for it from any thing that has yet passed in this debate.

But to proceed. His lordship has now explained himself to a sense not to be found fault with in this particular; but the consequence must be, that this instance can have no meaning at all as it stands applied in his sermon. For consider: his lordship's observation is, p. 1. of his sermon, that "the signification of a word well known and understood by those who first made use of it, is very insensibly varied by passing through many mouths, and by being taken and given by multitudes in common discourse; till it often comes to stand for a complication of notions as distant from the original intention of it, nay as contradictory to it as darkness is to light."

Take notice; the abuse of words here complained of is such as affects 'multitudes in common discourses:' of such words his lordship farther observes, "the very same word remaining, (which at first truly represented one certain thing,) by having multitudes of new inconsistent ideas in every age and every year added to it, becomes itself the greatest hindrance to the true understanding of the nature of the thing first intended by it. For instance,—prayer in all our Lord's directions," &c. Here you see, prayer is given as an instance of a word 'taken and given by multitudes in common discourse,'

till it has come to 'stand for a complication of notions, as contradictory to the original intention as darkness is to light.' His lordship in his Answer agrees that in the original intention of the word, it might mean such fervency and warmth as are consistent with such 'calmness and undisturbedness of mind as is the ornament and defence of the understanding.' The complicated notions which he condemns, are 'heat' and 'flame to such a degree,' &c. that is, as he explains himself, such as amount to 'perturbation, agitation, and disorder of soul.' Now then, either in the notion of the multitude, and in common discourse, prayer signifies 'perturbation, agitation, and disorder of soul;' or this instance is not to his purpose, has no meaning at all.

But that this is not a common notion of prayer his lordship shall witness; for having stated this false notion in his Answer, he does no longer charge it on the multitude, but says that "some honest Christians are uneasy under such notions, as ministers of parishes find," (if he may guess by himself): so that this notion of prayer, which stands as an instance of an abuse passing on the multitude in common discourse, is at last made out by guess only, and that guess founded in this, that his lordship has had some apply to him who were so weak as to be made uneasy by such notions. Thus the case stands: and whether his lordship did in his sermon mean to write against that fervency and warmth which by the multitude in common discourse is reckoned to be requisite to prayer, and has found himself obliged to retract it in his answer; or whether he at first chose an instance nothing to his purpose, and gave us the scruple and misunderstanding of some weak Christians, instead of the common notion of the multitude of Christians, is not my business to inquire: only I beg his lordship to name the books and sermons which have recommended perturbation, agitation, and a disorder of soul, as necessary to prayer; or 'taught men to raise their passions, till they know not where they are, nor what they are doing.' I am of opinion some of his weak Christians raised the notion out of their own fears and superstition, and told his lordship that some book or sermon had filled them with the scruples, (and the best sermon may give occasion to the scruples of weak minds,) and his lordship has taken their

word for it; and the authoritative interpretation of these weak men is all he has to support his charge. Be this as it will, his lordship is like to get little by his explications, if they prove to be all like this; and has as little reason to complain of being exposed by a misrepresentation of his sense.

Another explication of the same sort his lordship has given us in the Answer, for though the sermon is levelled at all in common, and the word *church* (not peculiar to papists) set aside and changed for that of *kingdom*, because the complication of notions belonging to it were in the use of the multitude, and in common discourse, as contradictory to the original intention of it as light to darkness; in which view any man would suppose that his lordship meant the multitude in his own country rather than the multitude of Italy and Spain; yet with respect to the very worst of the complicated notions belonging to the word *church*, namely, the absolute power of churchmen, his lordship says, "I profess I never knew nor heard of any church on earth, except the church of Rome in its latter corrupted state, which ever dared to claim such an absolute authority." And yet in the sermon preached against the church of Rome, (as we are now bound to believe,) there is not one word to show this intention; Rome, or the church of Rome, is not once mentioned, nor is there a single sentence to justify the church of which his lordship is a bishop. We have had much complaint of late, in books to which his lordship is no stranger, of protestant popery, and his lordship's known zeal in that cause is so eminent, that I believe it was never a doubt, till his lordship raised one, against whom the sermon was designed. We are now told the corrupt church of Rome only holds the doctrine he professes to write against; and if his lordship will *thus* explain the other parts of his doctrine which have given offence, it will hardly be worth while to differ with him about an expression; if he will really recant, it shall be allowed him to go off with the honor of explaining.

Another term to which his complaint refers is *vilify*.

Were I to acquaint the world with how much respect to his lordship's episcopal and personal character the debate in the Lower House began and ended, it would appear to deserve other resentments than it has already met with from his lordship.

But as they meant not, by the respect they showed, to court his favor, so neither shall I repeat it to avoid his anger. What the Committee did is public to the world; and if his lordship can pardon the great offence of showing the tendency of his doctrine, I will undertake to prove they have done nothing to justify this part of his complaint. To vilify a man is a base unworthy design, the poor artifice of a little mind, courting reputation by whispering the supposed faults of others, or venting an impotent desire of revenge in calumny and forgery. But what is there like this to charge on the proceedings of the Lower House? Was it base or unworthy to vindicate the church from his lordship's misrepresentations, or the just power of the king and legislature from his rash unwarrantable censures? Was it an unbecoming part to lay before his grace and the bishops, the proper judges of the cause, the evil tendency which they saw in his lordship's book and sermon? Had they any by-ends to serve in a cause so little favored? or have they laid any thing to his lordship's charge but his own words? Where then is the offence? Is it, perhaps, that they have given their reasons to support their complaint? If it is, the answer is short—they will be maintained.

The last article of his lordship's complaint is couched in these words, 'use me as you please.' When these words are used to a private man, they are at once a charge and a defiance; a charge that he deals unjustly, and a defiance of all he can do. How properly soever they may be used in such cases on some occasions, yet they are words never to be used to courts of judicature; and therefore, as they respect the Convocation, they are the highest contempt and—

But perhaps his lordship has no greater an idea of a convocation than he has of a church, and may think them only 'a number of men, whether small or great, whether dispersed or united:' yet whatever he may know or think of the matter, they are a number of men vested by the constitution with a judicial capacity to judge and censure. In that capacity they acted in all they did with relation to his lordship; and common decency should teach him to treat the jurisdiction he is under with proper respect; common prudence should suggest to him that such bodies never die; and that he may not always find shelter

under a royal writ. But whatever indignation his lordship shall now think fit to show, it will be no surprise to those who remember in what manner he treated the Lower House of Convocation when he was only a private presbyter; with what an air he condemned their proceedings, called them to their duty, and defied their authority; as if he had then been all that he now desires to be. This considered, I say, his lordship has no right to complain, supposing the manner of the Convocation's proceeding towards him to have been other than it was.

I shall not enter into a detail of his lordship's conduct in times past, or lay to his charge any warm expression that may be excused by the heat of controversy: I only desire the reader to take a view with me of the many civilities which lie dispersed in his 'Preservative,' a book lately written against the non-jurors; in which cause the clergy need not have been made parties against the government, had not his lordship in his great tenderness and goodness gone out of his way to compel them to come in.

The title-page is the first thing that offers itself; and the book (as being nobly descended, I suppose) has more names than one. The first is, 'A Preservative against the Principles and Practices of the Non-Jurors both in Church or State.'* Can there be a better? Does it not fully take in all that the most zealous friend to the government can wish or desire to see on the argument? Why then is a second added? a second too, that has not one word in it to adapt it peculiarly to the controversy of the non-jurors! Conscience and common sense extend to every cause, and are therefore peculiar to none. It is true; but his lordship has distinguished in his second title, which is, 'An Appeal to the conscience and common sense of the Christian Laity.' So flaming was his zeal against his own order, that he could not contain himself from expressing it in his title-page, and making an occasion, where none was offered, to show it. An appeal *to* somebody is also an appeal *against* somebody. Against whom is this appeal brought? Against the non-jurors you will say: it is natural indeed to think so from the occasion of the book: but hold a little. The con-

* The first edition is referred to.

sciences and common sense of the Christian laity are appealed to; now the Christian laity can in no sense or propriety of language be opposed to non-jurors: there are Christian laity as well as Christian clergy among the non-jurors; there are so likewise among the jurors; but the distinction of the body of Christians into clergy and laity is so well known, that there can be no doubt in this case but that the appeal is brought against the Christian clergy; and the candid intimation it holds forth is, that they are void of conscience and common sense; for an appeal to the laity as having conscience and common sense, is an appeal against the clergy as having neither. If the reader still doubts of his lordship's meaning, he shall have it cleared up by himself. See how he reproaches the clergy who took the oaths: they (the non-jurors) "saw with pleasure, that many of those who took the oaths did it on a principle of reproach to the government, if not of shame to themselves; and that most of those who defended both that and the church united with it, moved very faintly in their work; treated the one as an usurpation, and the other as what it was barely lawful for the laity, in imitation of former precedents, to communicate with." No wonder his lordship should think they have no conscience or common sense, who took oaths on a principle of shame to themselves, and treated the government they owned as,—— I hate to repeat the words; which nothing but pride of heart and conceitedness of his own performances could have suggested. For when he says that 'MOST of those who defended both that and the church,' &c. do not mistake him as if he meant to except any of the clergy from this injurious reflexion: no, it is himself only and his few disciples that are excepted: the limitation only leaves room for his own triumphal chariot to pass over the neck of his brethren. Thus again, he tells us that the non-jurors had "the approbation and concurrence of many of the clergy, in the main points, to produce for themselves:" and, "I am persuaded they owe the greatest advantages of their cause *to a part of the clergy*." These are they who, in the preface, he tells us, "professing themselves his (that is, Jesus Christ's) followers and his ministers, substitute themselves in his place, and assume the authority of their great legislator and judge:"

which, by the by, is so plainly fixing the charge of assuming the authority of their legislator and judge on many or most of the English clergy, that his lordship must appear to every impartial reader as making a very unfair retreat, when he professes, in his Answer to Dr. Snape, that he "never knew nor heard of any church on earth except the church of Rome—which ever dared to claim such absolute authority."

But let us hear his lordship's reasons for thus addressing the laity. He is so good a logician as to know that the reasons which are as strong for addressing to the clergy as the laity, can be no good reasons for such separate address to the laity. The reasons which stand in the close of the preface are six: "I have addressed this to the Christian laity, *because* they must think themselves infinitely concerned in every part of it, if they have any regard left for, 1. themselves; 2. their estates; 3. their bodies; 4. their souls; 5. their children; 6. and their latest posterity." If nothing less than infinite concern will satisfy his lordship, he did judiciously in passing by the clergy in this address. They have learned from a better master not to be 'infinitely' concerned for 'themselves, their estates, and their bodies;' and if his lordship could find time from his important affairs of state to consider matters of another nature, he might know that five at least of his six reasons for lay-concern do not require it to be 'infinite:' and if a reasonable and proper concern may be excepted in these cases, how could these motives lead him to think of addressing to the laity rather than to the clergy? Does his lordship indeed believe them to be so abandoned a set of men as to have no concern for 'themselves, their estates, their bodies, their souls, their children, and their latest posterity?' I would desire nothing unreasonable of his lordship, nothing inconsistent with his present views; he shall not therefore be asked to grant they have any concern for their souls; but methinks it is a small matter to allow even a high-churchman to be concerned for himself, his estate, and body. The whole virtue of this may be comprised in one word, selfishness; a qualification, the praise of which is not in the gospel; though his lordship lays so much stress on it, as if he thought his book could no more be read than it could have been written without it.

For my own part, (to borrow an expression from his lordship,) I think it a very trifling part of this controversy what opinion his lordship has of the clergy. After he has condemned all the writers of antiquity, the bishops and martyrs of the Christian church, as 'weak men,' full of 'hard words and long stories,' (p. 44. Preservative.) no clergyman should be offended to find himself ill-used in such company. The freedom he takes with the venerable fathers of the primitive church shows that he can be very familiar on a slender acquaintance; and it is possible he may know no more of the modern clergy than of the ancient; and as little of both as he ever intends to know of those in his own diocese.

If the reader will pardon my curiosity, I have a mind to step a little out of my way, to see what entertainment his lordship has provided for the 'common sense of his laity.' His own account of it is worth preserving for the instruction of modest writers, who are often at a loss how to express themselves when they are forced to speak of their own performance. At page 2. then, his lordship undertakes to make them "a lasting foundation—and to lay down nothing but what will effectually and for ever be of service in this cause:" that he will go on no "precedents or examples:" page 3. He tells them, page 16. "with the help of this one argument you will *always* be able to answer what they pretend to allege from Scripture:" and at page 21. "I shall not enter here into any nice examination of what you cannot so well judge of, (rare common sense!) but put you in mind of something which flows from general and comprehensive principles, and which may be applied to all constitutions; and to our own in particular, let it be as they represent or not."—"The argument from hence is of that nature that you may securely depend on it:" p. 22. At page 28. the triumph is proclaimed in loftier sounds: "*Here* then is the argument which you may securely use against the vain attacks of our adversaries, be the attack from Scripture or from what they please." At page 30. his argument "hath all the demonstrations in the way of political truth which any geometrical proposition hath in the mathematics." Again, page 44. "the arguments which I am well assured will never fail you in this controversy are these that follow." But hark! the trumpet

sounds once more: "*Here* you will find a resting-place, and a strong retreat which they cannot shake;" and, page 89. "the argument again amounts to a demonstration in the strictest sense of the word." *Risum teneatis, amici?* But the matter grows too serious when his lordship claims for these arguments the authority of the eternal law of God. "I have shown you (says he, page 43.) that the civil power then in possession had as plain and evident a right as the eternal law of God can give to any government." How had he shown it? From Scripture? No; but from arguments of his own, from his own judgment on the case; or, as he expresses himself, from "necessity, reason, prudence; the nature of human society; the ends of government;" that is, from his own judgment formed on these topics and the case in view. Never more let his lordship condemn the absolute interpreters of the law; but let him shake hands with the pope; they have *divisum imperium*: the one is as infallible in politics as the other is in religion.

I am so much a friend to the present establishment (whatever his lordship may think) that I shall not consider the arguments he has used to support it; I will only leave this short remark for his lordship's use, that his reasons would not have had less weight had they been urged with more modesty.

But comprehensive principles, wide and strong foundations, are such curiosities, so unknown to the weak men of former ages, and (once more to be beholden to his lordship for a polite expression) 'such a new-invented engine of courting some among us;' that I cannot pass over this the brightest part of his performance, and which gives an air of mathematics to all the rest. An instance or two shall suffice, and will be enough to show the world the true use of comprehensive principles. Suppose then that it should prove inconvenient to any view you have to allow a man to give his oath already taken as an evidence of his present opinion; or otherwise, would you ridicule the poor reasoner who urges men to the performance of their duty in virtue of the oath they are under to perform it? Look into page 3. There is the principle which will never fail, containing the very essence of casuistical divinity: "to any men of common understanding—the having taken an oath, which they are since persuaded they find reason to repent of, is no argu-

ment for the keeping it. And—the best reparation they can make for it, when they come to judge it an unlawful and wicked obligation, is to act contrary to it as soon as possible." But should you want to prove just the contrary, that a man was of the same opinion ten years together, because of his oath taken at the beginning of the period; for instance, that the deprived bishops were of the same opinion at the time of their deprivation that they were of at the time of their consecration; see page 34.—there you have it: "a new-invented general principle cannot possibly help the cause of those bishops who by their own solemn acknowlegement could not but believe that the rightful civil power was vested with sufficient authority to deprive them." Here you see the strength of a comprehensive principle; whatever attack is made, it can never fail you, but will prove a secure retreat and a safe resting-place.

Another instance may be taken from the authority of the church and constitution; which may sometimes be of great use, and sometimes again an ugly difficulty in the way of some new-invented principle. What must be done then? Why, if you act with a narrow spirit, and under the prejudices of a stinted education, there is no help for you; but if you will make your principle comprehensive, demonstration is your friend, and will never forsake. For should you be attacked with the authority of the church of England, for instance, whose articles and doctrines you have subscribed, tell them, "that it is a scandal to the church of England to suppose that it has any peculiar doctrines, considered as the church of England:" and "that by the church of England is meant the collection or company of men who settled our articles," &c. and that they were "only fallible men:" and though they made articles indeed for the sake of unity of opinion, and you have subscribed them, tell them however, "that they expressly require all in their communion to take the Scripture (and not them) for the rule of their faith and practice:" p. 17.

On the other side, should you want the authority of the church and constitution for any notable piece of service, tell them, "here it ought to be considered what our constitution is;" (p. 32.) that "the point here is not whether this be right and fitting; but whether this were in fact our *constitution*:"

p. 33. And you may add farther, "that you imitate our first reformers, who scorned," &c. p. 88.

Observe only as a small circumstance, that there ought to be about sixty pages between the fallible men who made the articles, and the first reformers whom you imitate: *quod erat demonstrandum.*

There is one secret in this affair which with all my application I cannot master; but I will deal ingenuously, and not dissemble my weakness. I see plainly that the first reformers are sometimes to be imitated, and sometimes to be scorned; but why his lordship should direct a protestant disputing with a protestant to reject the authority of the first reformers, and yet direct a protestant disputing with a papist to insist on their authority, and to justify himself by their example, is what I cannot enter into. I doubt not but this argument will prove to the confusion of a papist, for comprehensive principles can never fail; but still I must lament my own weakness:

> Dii immortales, homini homo quid præstat!
> Stulto intelligens!

You see, gentle reader, what work his lordship has cut out for the common sense of his laity; whether there be whose common sense is fitted to the purpose, I know not; though one has taken on him in the name of the fraternity to thank his lordship; thus far rightly judging of himself, that if there be any men of such common sense, he is the fittest person in the world to be their representative: and could I think myself worthy of the office, I would thank his lordship in behalf of the clergy too, that having such employment for common sense, he was so very good as not to make use of theirs.

As much a friend as I am to demonstrations and comprehensive principles, I could wish the secret had not been exposed so nakedly to vulgar eyes. Who knows what work weak heads may make with these edged tools? Should Mr. Powel at Bath take a fancy to set up for mathematics, (and who can tell how great examples may tempt a man who has once already assumed the style and language of a bishop!) we should never have done with demonstration; all the wooden heads of his raree-show would be filled with resting places, strong retreats,

never-failing arguments, vain attacks, weak men of former times, hard words, long stories, &c.; and probably one of his new-invented engines of courtship would be ordered (for engines, you know, are but the master's tools) to thank his worship "for the generous regard shown to them and the world;" who "indeed rejoice when such defenders of truth dare to appear against the current of corrupt leaders and pretenders to new light:"—who always want either "capacity, or books, or leisure, or inclination, or something or other to answer his arguments:" one of which "has neither treated his worship with the best manners, nor the clearest reason:"*—and another, one Mr. Vindicator of the realm, "intending to mumble on, and growing prodigiously wise, but producing nothing to convince any man of common sense, at last proved that he had no head under his helmet, though he sometimes peeps out—but is not to be depended on in an out-post."†—"The sum of all which is, that his worship must be acknowleged one of the clearest writers in the world, and to have merited an eternal monument of gratitude from mankind, whose dark perplexities are dispelled by the prevailing light of his just and admirable reasoning."‡ And should any be against erecting this monument, let them take notice that his worship, with his "*massy* sense will most assuredly despise such mere pretenders to argument."‖

The aversion I have to these public orators, and the dread of the consequence should comprehensive principles ever fall under their management, is such, that I could not help expressing my fear, and giving it as a caution to honest people not to encourage them, since nobody can tell whose turn may come first to be abused; and no one in his wits would care to go to loggerheads with a man either of wood or iron.

The next thing to be considered is, his lordship's candid intimation that he suffers for his affection to the present establishment, and consequently that those who have treated him in the unhandsome manner complained of are disaffected to the government. "I have a great deal of reason," says he, Answer, p. 36. "to think that if I had really shaken those acts which exclude

* Layman's second Letter. † First Letter. ‡ Second Letter.
‖ Ibid.

papists, I should have experienced much more of civility than I have lately done." And when the doctor charged him with an inconsistency in his practice to his former doctrines, his lordship could think of nothing blameable in himself but his zeal, duty, submission, and sincere affection to king George.

This is the poorest refuge of a weak cause; a boy never cries *I'll tell my father*; till he is sure of being beat. For a bishop, when he is charged with having undermined all church authority, nay, in great measure the authority of the king and legislator, to plead his affection to the government, and to insinuate that his adversaries are Jacobites, is a plain evidence that he thinks he has a safer retreat and a stronger resting-place in the passions and affections of men than in their sense and understanding. If his lordship could have had patience to wait, he might have had a better answer put into his hands; he might have pleaded the act of grace, which would have been a plea altogether as decent, and I assure him much more to his purpose. Of his lordship's zeal and affection to the government I know nothing: of his service to it I shall have occasion to speak presently: in the meanwhile, who are the disaffected persons that have misused his lordship? If by misusing him he means the endeavors used to have his doctrines publicly censured, and in this sense directs his complaints against the Lower House of Convocation only, he does his grace and my lords the bishops the greatest injustice in the world; for he cannot but know that they were as forward in promoting this work, as ready to enter into it, as zealous to effect it, as any member of the Lower House. His grace, as I have heard, and to his honor be it spoken, espoused the cause with a concern becoming the primate of that church whose just powers and authority had been given up, if not wickedly, yet at least ignorantly and unadvisedly; if with no evil intentions or bad views, yet in fact to the service of very evil purposes and bad ends: if with no view of pleasing or displeasing any man living, yet apparently to the joy and triumph of the licentious and unruly, and to the infinite sorrow and grief of the virtuous and serious part of the nation. This was the sense that my lords the bishops had and expressed of his lordship's sermon; those especially I mean who stand unsuspected of any disaffection to the

government, and who were so watchful for the king's honor; (whether with reason or no is not the present concern,) that the main point they disagreed in with the Lower House was, whether the sermon, being published by his majesty's order, should be made part of the charge: which exception was so little intended to justify his lordship, that in truth it was built in part on this reason, that his lordship might have justice done him by the Convocation though the sermon were excepted; since doctrines of the same tendency had been sown with no sparing hand in his 'Preservative.'

And when the Lower House had gone into that method which the bishops did not think fit to concur in, yet that the difference in the manner might not defeat the common end in which both Houses heartily joined, the bishops had entered into measures to bring the matter to an issue in a way they thought proper; and had they sat one day more, his lordship need not have been at the trouble to tell the world what opinion his brethren are of in regard to his doctrine; for they would have told it themselves. In the Lower House of Convocation, though the same difference appeared with regard to the method of proceeding, yet no single word was said, no justification of his lordship's doctrine; but it was expressly given up by some of those who yet, for reasons above-mentioned, thought it not proper to touch the sermon.

What must we say then? Is his grace, are my lords the bishops, is every man of the Lower House of Convocation disaffected? or is disaffection a word to be played with? and is Jacobitism a name for every thing and person that his lordship does not like? Lay your hand to your heart, my lord, lay it close; and let it tell you how often you have used this reproach to serve your purposes; how frequently you have given vent to your own indignation under this pretence, and injured the character of men as worthy as yourself; nay, the Convocation and the whole clergy of the realm. These are the sacrifices, my lord, which you have been offering up to the powers of the world; your censors have been filled with the reputation and good name of your brethren, and you have consumed them in the fire of your zeal and passion. Passion and zeal, my lord, do not lose their name or their nature by being clothed in soft words, and breathed out in soft complaints.

The words of the mouth may be 'softer than butter, and yet war be in the heart; the words may be smoother than oil, and yet be very swords.'

But since his lordship lays so much stress on his services done to the government, I am willing to bestow one half hour more, before I conclude this paper, in considering the importance of them. He can mean nothing else, I think, but his writings for the government; and his last book, it may be supposed, is his choicest performance. The strength of his argument I shall not try; I wish it all the success that he can do for the sake of the cause, let the argument or the defender be what they will: but his method is, I think, directly opposite to the true interest of the government, and plainly shows that he meant something else besides, and more than the service of the government. To make this plain, I desire one thing only to be granted me; leaving however his lordship and his friends at liberty to deny it if they please. The proposition I would beg of those that are willing to grant it is this: that it is the true interest of the government to have all the people made easy in their submission and obedience to it; that to this purpose it is of no consequence to the government to inquire on what views or principles men come to be satisfied: be their principles what they will, if they lead to an intire and cheerful obedience, the end of the public is served.

Now his lordship sets himself purposely to beat down all arguments for obedience to the present government except one, his own. He tells us in his preface of the 'Preservative,' he will not concern himself whether king James really had a son, whether this be he or another substituted in his room; that he will go on no precedents or examples of mere submission either to civil or ecclesiastical governors; for these arguments, he says, "are the great strength of our enemies themselves."

"Nor shall I," says he, "apply myself to any others, merely on the foundation of having taken the oaths; for here too the non-jurors find an easy account."

Again, supposing a person be persuaded that it is barely lawful to submit to a *de facto* government; in that case his lordship tells us, "it may still be true that it is likewise lawful not to submit to it; nay, it may be still true that it is more

honorable and praiseworthy to be faithful to that authority, which is *de jure* intitled to his subjection.'

You see how his lordship uses the arguments, which many think of moment to the government: the illegitimacy of the Pretender, the obligation of oaths taken to the present establishment, the arguments arising from the constitution, and the precedents of law and fact, are all set aside to make way for his lordship's comprehensive principles. Suppose then that his lordship should prevail with any number of men so far as to convince them that their old foundation on which hitherto they have stood, and firmly as they thought, is bad, without being able to prove to them the goodness of his new one; is it not evident that as many converts of this sort as his lordship can get, so many friends the government must necessarily lose? The generality of the people have owned the present establishment, and given the most solemn assurance of obedience to it that man knows how to give or to require: some have done it on the foot of the constitution, which to their apprehension directs the subject to pay obedience to the king in possession; some on the determination made in this matter by the states of the realm, whom they esteem to be the proper judges in cases of this nature; others, as doubting of the legitimacy of the Pretender's birth, and others perhaps for other causes. All these, though setting out from differing points of the circumference, yet meet together in the centre, and are united in the one only material point, their obedience to the present government. And I would desire any sober man, who is unprejudiced in this cause, and has nothing at heart but the good of his country and the security of the present establishment, to tell me what possible good or advantage can accrue to either by endeavoring to unsettle any of these people in their present notions; and to set them adrift again in order to roam about for new principles, to the manifest hazard of their growing dissatisfied with themselves and the government. For when men are once persuaded that they have hitherto submitted to the government out of an error, it will be such a prejudice against it in their way, that perhaps they may never be able to get over. And surely no friend to the government would willingly throw this weight into the contrary scale.

It is easy to see what his lordship means by all this. It is certainly a greater compliment to the present powers to tell them of their divine right and the unalterable law of God on which they are founded, than to suppose any defect, though but for argument sake. And this must be said for the credit of his lordship's address, that he has raised as courtly a doctrine out of his principles of resistance as ever did the most servile preacher of passive obedience. His lordship has raised out of his principles an unalterable law of God for the right of the present civil powers; and what more did the others ever pretend to? The Vindicator of the church and realm states all the views under which the present establishment can be considered, and has shown under all that obedience to it is the people's duty. His lordship has singled him out to be treated with scorn; he allows the poor man to mean well, and kindly excuses his weakness; and yet, weak as he is, the whole difference between them lies in this; the Vindicator by many arguments endeavors to make many friends to the government; his lordship in his one argument had but one view, to make the government a friend to himself.

His lordship is so sensible of this himself, so conscious that his way of treating this argument can never make any friends to the government, or have any influence towards reconciling the minds of the disaffected, that he is content to propose to himself only the glory "of furnishing such arguments as may preserve the good disposition, and increase the zeal of the honest and uncorrupted part of the nation:" that is, of such as are already well affected and want not his help; without pretending "to hope to convince any of our adversaries, or (which is still a less thing) of those who have been misled by them." If this was the view of all his writings, his lordship might have saved himself the trouble of distinguishing in his controversy by telling us which he 'took 'to be the trifling part of it.' We have been brought to the brink of ruin by feuds and animosities among ourselves: the non-jurors have corrupted too many of our people; so many, that the late rebellion was formed on the prospect of a general disinclination to the government: of those who stood firm to their allegiance, all did not stand on the same arguments. In this sad case, what remedy does his lordship bring? Why, his reasoning is

directly pointed to convince some of the king's friends that they were mistaken in the grounds of their allegiance; those, I mean, who were not so on his lordship's hypothesis; without any prospect of hope, even to himself, of reclaiming those who had been misled by the non-jurors: and this he calls, 'A Preservative against the principles and practices of the Non-Jurors, both in Church and State;' though, if his lordship had been disposed to deal openly, he might better have called it, 'A Preservative against the principles and practices both in Church and State of all those (myself and a few friends excepted) who have taken the oaths to His Majesty King George.'

Non defensoribus istis
Tempus eget.

Thus his lordship has succeeded in his political writings: let us see whether his divinity was conceived under a planet more auspicious to the government, and is like to be attended with better consequences. To judge of the goodness of a remedy, it is necessary to know the nature of the distemper; and if you look abroad, you will find that the great dissatisfaction of the people in general arises from the suspicions they are under, that the constitution of the church is to be given up; that the dissenters are to be let in on an equal foot; that the fences of the establishment are to be broken down; that in the room of the comely order and regularity not yet proscribed, anarchy and confusion are to be set up.

These fears were instilled into the minds of the people by the united endeavors of the worst enemies and (if you will take their words) the best friends of the government; that is, by Jacobites and dissenters. The former saw that nothing could shake the government like an apprehension in the people that their religious rights and the church (of which they are even passionately fond) were to be subverted. They saw that the most zealous advocates for the present establishment put its whole defence on this single point, the preservation of the constitution; from whence they argued that if the people had no reason to love or obey the government but for the sake of their constitution, it would tear the very ground on which they stood from under their feet, could the people be made to suspect that the constitution was not secure.

The dissenters joined their godly endeavors to promote the same end. They were perpetually telling their poor neighbors in the country that now they had a k— of their own; that they soon should have the churches too; and hardly a market-day passed but one of the brethren would be offering money for the church, to lay his coal, his wool, or his malt in, according as his trade led him to speak.

But were these weak men (you will say) to be minded? No, Sir, not by you or me: but these weak men talked to others as weak as themselves; and a weak man's story will make an impression on a weak man's head.

And thus the country, what with the insinuations on the one hand and the triumphs on the other, were made sick at heart, and in a little time the distemper seized the head. In their distraction they talked of nothing but churches and meeting-houses: the same images danced before their eyes, and their hearts burnt with the same fears; and impatient to wait for the ruin they expected, they began first with their adversaries, and in their fury destroyed the meeting-houses; which might have stood unmolested, as they had for many years before, had they not been set up to rival their churches.

The common people are no dissemblers; and it is ridiculous to think that they do one thing and mean another. And therefore the wise politicians who saw through the design of the mob, and gravely judged that they really meant the Pretender, and that their zeal against meeting-houses was only a pretence, have my consent to be wise by themselves. To me it is evident that their fears for their church, their indignation against those who made no secret of their ungodly hopes to destroy it, were the true springs of their madness; and if the Pretender was joined in the cause, he owed all his interest to these fears, these strange and ill-grounded suspicions.

Now in this mournful state what had the friends of the government to do? What was a proper part for one who loved his country, his king, and the church? What else was left but to stem the tide, if possible, of these jealousies; to show the people their mistake, and to give them a true account of the royal purposes of the king; who from the first resolved to

make the constitution in church and state the rule of his administration?

I had in the time of this distraction the honor to serve his majesty in the commission of the peace, and had some rough work thrown on my hands in the country where I lived; and though as a magistrate I could not but make a just distinction between the illegal and violent proceedings on one side, and the petulancy and insolence on the other, yet I saw that the passions on one side could never be allayed without checking the provocations on the other; and that the insolence of some would prove as destructive to the interest of the government as the violence of others.

But how has his lordship been employed in the mean time? Has he written one sermon, nay, one page, to allay the fears of the people? Has he once declared his own concern for the established church? or has he been so just as to declare his majesty's in the many opportunities he has had for it? No; nothing like this has been heard from him. On the contrary, in a book written (as he says) for the service of the government, and in the heat of the distraction, he falls on the ministers of Christ, as "substituting themselves in his place; as assuming the authority of their great legislator and judge."* He ridicules the succession of the ministry, and regular ordinations as trifles, niceties, dreams, inventions of men; and disdains and disclaims all kind of excommunication and absolution, those known instruments of church discipline; and represents them to the people as the plagues of the world, as "human engines permitted to work for a time by the providence of God, as outcries of human terror and vain words."† On this performance his lordship receives the incense of his humble flatterers. The layman thanks him, and understood his meaning so well as to be able to return it him in this decent language: "When they (the clergy) exalt themselves by deducing their stations from the Apostles, and drawing down a divine right like a Welsh pedigree, we must tell them of their humble ancestors—a skit, a drag-net, or an old tent."‡ The anatomist styles him

* Preface to Preservative. † Preservative, p. 101.

‡ First Letter, p. 40.

the true Protestant Bishop, &c. Blown up with this success, his next step is to publish in the royal audience the same doctrines. He denies all power in the church, all in the state to support religion; he impeaches the act of uniformity, and the articles of the church; and pleads for a removal of those negative discouragements which hurt nobody, and are meant only to secure the church. What is this but throwing oil into the fire, and kindling anew the flames that were dying away for want of fuel? His lordship is no weak man; how then shall we persuade the people that his are vain words? He will be thought to know more than others, and yet to be so wise as to speak nothing improper; how then shall we deal with this imputation? Should a man endeavor it, would he not be answered, the bishop knows more than you, and could best judge whether it was proper or no? Help me, art! all ye powers of logic and learning, help me to remove this false, this vile suggestion! And yet what art, what learning is wanting to lay the blame at the proper door, and to show those who are most nearly concerned how such preaching and such doctrines disturb the peace and threaten the security of the public? This was fit work for a Convocation: this they were doing, and putting into proper hands the noblest opportunity of dispelling all the fears of the people at once, and bowing the hearts of the nation, even as the heart of one man.

And now let any man of sober sense and reason weigh his lordship's services to the government, and speak impartially. Has any thing he has done tended to create in the minds of the people a confidence of their happiness, or to make them take pleasure in the prospect before them? Nay, has not all he has done tended to make them suspicious, fearful, and uneasy? Is he any assistance to his friends, any terror to his enemies? Are not his doctrines and his new schemes a weight, a heavy weight on those who espouse him? And must we still be told that it is disaffection to the government not to approve his doctrines? Were such doctrines once to grow general among the bishops, episcopacy would be a word less bellowed out than it is.* In such circumstances the danger of the church would

* Letter to the Dean of Chichester, p. 8.

seem less dangerous; ruin itself would afford some prospect of deliverance; and the episcopal chairs would fall the less lamented for the sake of those who filled them.

But we hope for better things; in confidence of which we earnestly and ardently wish that his Majesty King George's days may be many and prosperous; that his government may be calm and serene as his own temper; fixed and unmoveable as his royal heart.

SUMMARY.

REASON given for entering on the work. Design of the letter-writer, as expressed by himself. The charge is merely a personal one: the inquiry is, whether the dean had not taught the same doctrine which he disapproved when taught by the bishop. The point of agreement between them, as stated in the letter, solely regards the authority of the civil magistrate in matters of religion. To enable the reader to judge between them, it is shown how this cause comes to be attended with any difficulties. If religion, as it relates to the worship and service of God, were one plain and uniform thing, about which there could be no more reason to dispute than about the law of reason and nature in moral points, there would then be nothing left for the magistrate but to use his power to inforce obedience in religion as well as in morality; and his right to do so would be undeniable. So in particular it may be said of the Christian institution. But the case in fact is, that the magistrate may possibly misapply his rewards and punishments, when he interposes in matters of a religious nature; since many points of mere speculation, &c. have by degrees been brought into religion, and churches have divided on those points: instance of the church of Rome. The dean's sermon declared to have had reference to its doctrines. True point of the question under consideration stated; namely, "so to preserve the authority of the magistrate in matters of religion, as not to set him up to be a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; so to exclude him from meddling in these points, as not to destroy his authority to support true religion," &c. This declared

to have been a point argued in the dean's sermon on the 5th of November. With respect to his agreement with the bishop, his lordship's opinion is shown from the sense which his words seem to carry. First passage produced from his lordship's sermon is one controverted between the bishop and Dr. Snape. His lordship's explication of it considered: his doctrine shown to amount to this; viz. that it is an invasion of Christ's kingdom to add sanctions to his laws.

But the laws of Christ are almost all laws of reason and nature, and intended to make us perform the will of God: therefore, for princes to add sanctions to make men obey the laws of reason, or perform the will of God, is an invasion of Christ's kingdom. The letter-writer's exposition is different from this. His evasion shown to be not applicable to the passage under consideration. Second passage produced, as quoted in the Representation, and by the letter-writer: this commented on: third passage produced and commented on also. From the whole it is concluded that the bishop's doctrine stands thus:

That it is an invasion of Christ's kingdom for any power on earth to add temporal rewards and punishments to Christ's laws.

That it is contrary to Christian maxims to encourage true religion, or discourage the contrary by the sanctions of this world:

And consequently it is impious and wicked for any prince to interpose his authority to support true religion and the honor of God.

It is next shown what the dean publicly declared on the same subject. Passages quoted from sermons preached before and after that to which the letter-writer refers. These show a difference from that of the bishop. Doctrine of the 5th of November sermon next declared. It had reference to the occasion of the day, and the practices of the church of Rome, then naturally

under consideration. But the bishop chose his subject, and without any mention made of the church of Rome and its practices, he writes down the magistrate's power in all cases. With respect to our Saviour's reason for the exclusion of temporal power in matters of religion, the dean's words in his sermon were: 1. that it holds in all cases with respect to church power; that is, the church, as such, has no temporal power: 2. that the argument does not affect the civil magistrate's power, nor tie up his hands from interposing with the civil sword in matters proper for his jurisdiction, however they may be pretended to be allied to religion. All points of conscience relating to this subject are throughout considered under two views: 1. as residing in the mind, (when they are styled matters purely of a religious nature,) where the magistrate ought not to touch them: 2. as breaking out into ill practices, which the magistrate may lawfully punish. On this distinction the whole sermon is founded: this proved by various passages. If these be not sufficient to show its true scope and aim, one evidence more may be produced in the letter-writer himself. It is shown that although passages produced from the dean's sermon and that of the bishop may agree in words, they differ in sentiments, since they speak of different things. Here the subject might be left; but to set the matter quite clear, particular passages produced by the letter-writer out of the dean's sermon are examined; whence the disagreement between his doctrines and those of the bishop is made manifest. Surprise expressed that the Committee is treated with so much anger for seeing what all the world sees. Both friends and foes agree in his lordship's meaning. Instances of the *Layman's Letter of Thanks*; the *Anatomy of the Convocation*, &c. Their praise converted into censure. The bishop's account of the Answer, which he is preparing to the Representation, considered. The charge in the Representation is, that his lordship's doctrines tend to subvert all government and discipline in the church of Christ:

this commented on and explained. It is not intended to enter farther into this matter than is necessary to show that the argument which his lordship is preparing against absolute authority will not come up to the point of the Representation; therefore many passages of his sermon are passed over by the dean. But the bishop says in his Answer to Dr. Snape, pages 37. 38. that all he has taught amounts only to a denial of absolute authority. The proposition given in his own words. Hence all this flame has been raised about nothing; about a doctrine which is not disputed. Remarks on this point. Conclusion.

AN ANSWER

TO A LETTER SENT TO THE REV. DR. SHERLOCK, &c. RELATING TO HIS SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE LORD MAYOR, NOVEMBER 5, 1712.* TO WHICH ARE ADDED, SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE ACCOUNT THE LORD BISHOP OF BANGOR HAS GIVEN OF HIS INTENDED ANSWER TO THE REPRESENTATION.

THE necessity I am under of doing justice to myself against no less an imputation than having concurred in condemning a doctrine which I have publicly taught, must be my excuse for troubling the world with an affair which is so wholly concerned with persons and so little with things, as not to be worth their attention.

The design of the letter-writer is expressed by himself, and I shall give it in his own words: "I do not design to examine the grounds of what his lordship has said in his sermon, nor the grounds of what you have said in your sermon preached before the lord-mayor, November 5, 1712. I shall only point out some passages in your sermon, which are conceived to carry as evil a tendency as those positions of his lordship mentioned in the Report of the Committee of which you were a member, and to which Representation you concurred."

The charge, you see, is merely personal. The inquiry is not whether the bishop and I are both in the right or both in the wrong, but whether I have not taught the same doctrine which I disapproved when taught by his lordship.

The letter-writer may think it an honor to me to have the world told that I agree with the bishop of Bangor; but the

* See Biographical Memoir, p. xxxix. and Discourse III. p. 294.

compliment comes attended with such circumstances at present, that I cannot accept it. And I hope his lordship will pardon the necessity I am under of showing that his doctrines and mine are not the same.

My intention is, not to transgress the bounds prescribed by the letter-writer, nor to examine the tendency of his lordship's doctrine or my own. The appeal is made to the world, and there let it rest until the examination shall be resumed in proper time and place. The civilities bestowed on me in the letter are so great, that I must be forced to dismiss them once for all with the answer usually made on such occasions—it is much more than I deserve.

The point of agreement between his lordship and me, as stated in the letter, solely regards the authority of the civil magistrate in matters of religion. To enable the reader then to judge between us, it will be proper to show him how this cause comes to be attended with any difficulties. It will be allowed, I suppose, that as the magistrate derives his power from God, and rules over reasonable creatures, it is his proper business to see that obedience be paid to the dictates of the law of reason with respect to God as well as men, and that offences against them be punished. In this case civil sanctions do not create the original obligation to the law, but are added in aid of the original obligation, the more effectually to secure the subject's obedience; for the law has its primary force from reason and the light of nature; and the civil sanction is designed, not to persuade men of the principles whereof they are already persuaded, but to deter them from acting against the law which they are under, in virtue of the reason and understanding given them by God.

There wants no human law to make murder, rapine, or injuring one another, to be crimes; they would be crimes were there no civil law in the world: all then that the human law in those cases can do, is to declare the original law for the better instruction of the people; and to ascertain the punishment of transgression in order to guard the virtue.

I would observe to the reader that these moral laws are a part of religion; they are the main constituent parts of Christian religion, as his lordship informs us, (p. 17. Sermon.) The

laws of Christ "are almost all general appeals to the will of —God, to his nature known by the common reason of mankind, and to the imitation of that nature, which must be our perfection." From whence it is plain that whoever excludes the magistrate from adding sanctions to the laws of Christ, must exclude him from adding sanctions to the laws of reason and nature.

But to proceed. Were religion in general, as it relates to the worship and service of God, and to the principles and methods by which men hope to obtain his favor, one plain uniform thing, which there was no more reason to dispute about than there is about the law of reason and nature in moral points; it is plain there would be nothing with respect to religion left to the magistrate but to use his power to inforce obedience in matters of religion as well as of morality; and his right to do so would be undeniable.

This could hurt no man's conscience, because conscience cannot be pleaded for the breach of duties plain and indisputable; and it is evidently the magistrate's duty, as he is the vicegerent of God, to maintain the honor of God and religion.

As to the Christian institution particularly, were the church every where what it ought to be, one and the same, teaching the same doctrines which Christ and his Apostles published, and no other; so that Christians had no reason to dispute which were true doctrines and which not; it would be very proper for the magistrate, nay, it would be his duty to add the sanctions of this world to keep the people steadfast to the duty which they acknowleged to be incumbent on them in virtue of the principles and doctrines universally received. For since the laws of Christ are, as his lordship informs us, "declarations of conditions to be performed in *this world*," (p. 17. Sermon,) and do most of them, as I will venture to add, affect the happiness as well of public societies as of private men; how could the magistrate of this world better employ that portion of power intrusted to him than by applying it to those very points to which God has applied the sanctions of the other world? Can he have a better example to follow than that of God himself in using the power intrusted to him by God? or are those points not fit to be promoted by rewards and punishments, to which

God himself has annexed rewards and punishments? For it ought to be remembered that all rewards and punishments, whether of this world or of the next, operate on the mind in the same way: one may be stronger than the other, and influence more, as it may happen; but still they are rewards and punishments, and operate as such.

But the case in fact is, that the magistrate may possibly misapply his rewards and punishments when he interposes in matters of a religious nature; since many points of mere speculation, or such at least as have no direct influence on practical duties, have by degrees been brought into religion; and churches have divided on those points. Thus between us and the church of Rome there are many controversies of this sort; about the number and nature of sacraments; about the power of the pope; about auricular confession, penance, and the like. In these points the power of the sword is applied in popish countries to make men believe as the church believes, whether they can or no; that is, not to secure obedience to a plain law, but to force a belief of a doubtful or perhaps a false opinion. And this, it will appear, was the only point before me in the sermon referred to by the letter-writer; as will be easily admitted by those who will call to mind the occasion of it. The 5th of November was the day on which it was preached; and the methods used by the church of Rome to propagate her opinions were, as they ought to be, in the preacher's view.

Now with regard to the question before us, here lies, as far as I can judge, the true point: so to preserve the authority of the magistrate in matters of religion, as not to set him up 'to be a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart,' or to give him a right to force on men opinions and doctrines which their reason and understanding cannot admit; so to exclude him from meddling in these points, as not to destroy his authority to support true religion and the honor of God in the world.

There may be difficulties in adjusting the exact bounds of the magistrate's power in these cases; but I am no more concerned with them at present than the letter-writer is. I have stated this point only to enable the reader to judge whether the doctrines I have published on this article are consistent with themselves, or agreeable to the bishop's.

I have been no great writer, and yet in the few things which I have been called on to publish, I have fully declared myself on this argument; and I will show the reader,

1. That in a sermon* published before that of the 5th of November, and in one published after it,† I have asserted and maintained the magistrate's authority to preserve true religion and the honor of God in the world.

2. That in the 5th of November sermon I did, as the occasion led me, consider how far the magistrate's power extended, in points of opinion and speculation, with respect to the consciences of men; and that I have so asserted his authority as not to subject him and his government to all the extravagant efforts of what men call conscience; so confined it, as not to give him a right to hurt men for mere opinions and speculations in matters of religion.

But that we may not lose sight of the main point, the agreement with the bishop, I shall show his lordship's opinion from the sense which his words seem to me to carry; not intending hereby to preclude his lordship from any other sense or meaning which he shall think fit to insist on. And as to the particular passages of my sermon, confronted with passages from his lordship's by the letter-writer, they shall be considered in the close of this paper.

The first passage I shall produce out of his lordship's sermon will be found in p. 13. and 14. octavo edition.

"It is the same thing, as to rewards and punishments, to carry forward the great end of his kingdom. If any men on earth have a right to add to the sanctions of his laws; that is, to increase the number or alter the nature of the rewards and punishments of his subjects in matters of conscience or salvation; they are so far kings in his stead, and reign in their own kingdom, and not in his."

This passage has been controverted between the bishop and Dr. Snape; and it is but fair to consider his lordship's explication.

* The one preached before the Queen, Jan. 30, 1704. See Vol. iii. p. 258.

† The one preached before the House of Commons, March 8, 1714. See Vol. iii. p. 309.

The doctor tells the bishop that this passage amounts to saying, "that if any king, parliament, &c. shall encourage religion by any temporal rewards, &c. they usurp the dominion of Christ, and dethrone him from his spiritual kingdom:" Doctor's Letter, p. 29.

The bishop, in answer, says, "that whoever alter the nature of these (that is, Christ's rewards and punishments) or add to them, do truly themselves affix rewards and punishments; therefore they are so far kings themselves. That according to me, they dethrone Christ from his spiritual kingdom, is your own hard and unjust comment. But that as far as they alter his sanctions or add new ones; that, I say, so far they reign in their own kingdom, is in my opinion as clear a proposition as this; that as far as new sanctions are brought into Christ's religion, so far new sanctions are brought in."

According then to this explication, one end of his lordship's rejecting the word church because of the inconsistent notions belonging to it, and making choice of the clearer image of the kingdom, was for the sake of advancing this very consistent notion, "that as far as new sanctions are brought into Christ's religion, so far new sanctions are brought in." I believe the world will not part with their old notions for such improvements as these; nor would his lordship have given such a sense of his words, had he not been so surrounded with difficulties as to be able to give no other. A cause seems to me to be gasping for life, when it is brought so low as to hang on identical propositions: they are generally the last pangs, and portend a sudden dissolution.

But his lordship has not taken his own words fairly in this explication; for he does not say barely, they are so far kings and reign in their own kingdom: but his words are, "they are so far kings in his stead," &c. To be king in another's stead is to exercise his authority either with or without his commission; and therefore his lordship must prove that he meant here to assert that kings have Christ's commission, and are his vicegerents, to add sanctions to his laws; and that he meant in his sermon to commend them for so doing; as they deserve to be commended, when they act in pursuance of a commission received from Christ; or he must be content to be told that he

charges them with acting, when they add sanctions to the laws of Christ in the kingdom of Christ, against his consent; and that is, I think, as the doctor says, "to usurp the dominion of Christ." But farther; let the connexion of this passage, as it stands in his lordship's sermon, be considered. He affirms, p. 12. "if any absolute vicegerent authority—were lodged in any men on earth, the consequence would be that what still retains the name of the church of Christ would not be the kingdom of Christ, but the kingdom of those men vested with such authority." His lordship pursues the argument in this and the following page, and concludes it in these words: "if such an absolute authority be once lodged with men under the notion of interpreters, they then become the legislators, and not Christ; and they rule in their own kingdom, and not in his." You see, by comparison of these passages, that to rule in their own kingdom is, in his lordship's sense, to throw Christ out of his; for what retains the name of the church would not, he says, in this case be the kingdom of Christ, but the kingdom of these men, &c.

Immediately after this argument follows the passage quoted: "it is the same thing as to rewards and punishments," &c. What is the same thing? Why his lordship tells you, that to add to the sanctions of Christ is the same thing as to pretend to an absolute authority of interpreting his laws; and such absolute authority, he had said before, made the church cease to be the kingdom of Christ, and to become the kingdom of those men, &c. And consequently, when he affirms in the passage now before us that whoever adds sanctions to Christ's laws are kings in his stead, and reign in their own kingdom, and not in his, his meaning must be that they divest Christ of his kingdom.

I was surprised to find his lordship accusing the doctor of making a hard and unjust comment on his works, when he himself makes the same comment on them in the very next passage, which is joined to that quoted, by this connexion; 'so it is—whenever—.' How is it? Why look to the end of the passage; his lordship will tell you, p. 14. "this is so far taking Christ's kingdom out of his hands, and placing it in their own." That is, if I can understand, it is dethroning Christ from his spiritual

kingdom. His lordship explains himself to the same purpose in his first observation from the doctrine of his sermon, p. 24. "substituting others in his place as lawgivers and judges in the same points in which he must either *alone* or *not at all* be lawgiver and judge." And in p. 20. where his lordship treats of this very point of adding such sanctions, his words are, "there is so far a change from a kingdom which is not of this world to a kingdom which is of this world;" which is something more than only saying, where sanctions are added, there sanctions are added; for a change from the kingdom of Christ to a kingdom of this world is a manifest invasion of the kingdom of Christ by a kingdom of this world. I think it is evident then what his lordship must mean by reigning in their own kingdom; and if there be occasion, there are still more passages in the sermon to confirm this sense of the expression.

The letter-writer's exposition of this passage is very extraordinary: "His lordship says, if any men on earth have a right, &c. thereby excluding laity or clergy, church or state, from *altering* the nature of rewards and punishments in matters of conscience and salvation." What does the good man mean by excluding them from altering what it is impossible they ever should alter. The rewards and punishments, his lordship tells us, are the future rewards and punishments of another world; how then should any mortal alter them; add what you will, yet still they will remain unalterable. And therefore I could never understand what his lordship meant by altering the nature of Christ's rewards and punishments; much less can I understand the letter-writer, who makes this altering to be the whole of what his lordship affirms. And now I will venture to say that his lordship's words in this passage carry the following sense: that if any men on earth (that is, as the letter-writer explains him, either church or state) have or claim a right to add to the sanctions of Christ's laws, they so far become kings in his stead, and divest him of his power.

And here I must once more remind the reader what the laws of Christ are in his lordship's opinion; "they are almost all general appeals to the will of God, to his nature known by the common reason of mankind; and to the imitation of that nature." That is, they are almost all laws and dictates of rea-

son and nature: to which his lordship adds, "the being subjects to Christ is to this very end, that we may the better and more effectually perform the will of God."

His lordship's doctrine then being laid together, amounts to this:

It is an invasion of the kingdom of Christ to add sanctions to the laws of Christ.

But the laws of Christ are almost all laws of reason and nature, and are intended to make us perform the will of God.

Therefore, for princes to add sanctions to make men obey the laws of reason and nature, or perform the will of God, is an invasion of the kingdom of Christ.

I have put this into form, that his lordship's doctrine may more evidently appear, and in imitation of his lordship, who seems in his late performances to be grown very fond of mood and figure. The letter-writer has another exposition in favor of his lordship, which he meant, I suppose, to extend to all that his lordship has said on this head. His words are: "his lordship asserts that to apply force or flattery, worldly pleasure or pain, in order to make men profess this or that opinion, (for this is evidently his meaning,) is to act," &c. This passage was, I confess, to me a strong presumption that the letter had not gone through his lordship's hand; he must be too much aware of what he has delivered in his sermon to use so poor an evasion. The letter-writer has offered it to his consideration, and when it lies before him, he will find that something he must part with, and I heartily wish him the happier choice.

In the meantime I will show the letter-writer that his evasion is not applicable to the passage before us. His lordship's words are, "if any men on earth have a right—to add to the sanctions of his laws, to increase the number—of the rewards and punishments of his (that is, Christ's) subjects," &c. His lordship, you see, speaks of increasing the rewards and punishments of the subjects of Christ, and with regard to the laws of Christ; that is, with regard to the laws they already profess. In this case therefore the profession is supposed, for they are subjects; and doubtful opinions are out of his lordship's case, for he speaks only of adding sanctions to the laws of Christ. And that justice may be done his lordship, I desire his own account of the subjects of Christ may be considered: "the

church of Christ is the number of persons who are sincerely and willingly subjects to him as lawgiver and judge," &c. To be sincerely and willingly subjects to him as lawgiver, is to be sincerely and willingly subject to his laws; and therefore when his lordship speaks of adding sanctions to the laws of Christ, and with respect to the subjects of Christ, the willing choice is supposed over; otherwise they could not be subjects. And therefore his lordship could not in this case speak of the sanctions of the civil power as they may be made instruments of forcing a persuasion, but merely as they are motives of obedience to the laws already professed and admitted. He does not speak of civil sanctions as they may be applied to make men subjects to Christ; but only as they are an increase of the rewards and punishments of those who are already subjects to Christ; that is, as they are calculated not to force a doubtful opinion, or a religion not yet professed, but as they are intended to secure obedience to a plain law already received.

The next passage quoted in the Representation, and by the letter-writer, is in p. 18. of the sermon: "the sanctions of Christ's laws are rewards, &c.—nay, not the much lesser negative discouragements that belong to human society. He was far from thinking that these could be the instruments of such a persuasion as he thought acceptable to God."

'He was far from thinking,' and 'as he thought acceptable to God,' are fine expressions when applied to our Saviour, and set his authority very high: they may serve his lordship or me; but when applied to a divine infallible teacher, they are neither proper nor decent. However, here his lordship has got hold of the word persuasion. I wish him joy of it; and let him make the most of his word: it can only, in my poor opinion, serve to show that he mistakes the nature and tendency of negative discouragements, which are not meant as instruments of persuasion to those who dissent from the church, but merely as a security to the church from those who would destroy it. Is there no difference between forcing a man to join with you, and hindering him from hurting you? Is it persecution not to trust a man with power to injure yourself? This is the only use of negative discouragements, and it is a very right use. Negative discouragements are no more instruments of persua-

sion than locks and bolts are instruments of making men honest; because they serve to shut the door against such as would force in to spoil you of your goods. All I shall observe from this passage is, that his lordship does not allow the magistrate to give any encouragement to true religion, or even any negative discouragement to the contrary.

The next and only passage more that I shall produce on this occasion, is at p. 20. of the sermon.

"As soon as ever you hear of any of the engines of this world, whether of the greater or the lesser sort, you must immediately think that then and so far the kingdom of this world takes place. For, 1. if the very essence of God's worship be spirit and truth; 2. if religion be virtue and charity, under the belief of a supreme governor and judge; 3. if true real faith cannot be the effect of force; 4. and if there can be no reward where there is no willing choice; then in all or any of these cases, to apply force or flattery, worldly pleasure or pain, is to act contrary to the interest of true religion, as it is plainly opposite to the maxims on which Christ founded his kingdom; who chose the motives which are not of this world, to support a kingdom which is not of this world."

Here, I think, there is no difficulty in his lordship's expressions: he roundly affirms that to apply rewards and punishments in all or any of the cases mentioned, is to "act contrary to the interest of true religion, as it is plainly opposite to the maxims on which Christ founded his kingdom." Yet even here the letter-writer would persuade us that all his lordship has said amounts only to this: "to make use of temporal rewards of religion is adding so far something of this world to a kingdom not of this world:' (Letter p. 17.) which is indeed a very safe proposition. It has this only fault, that it is nothing to the purpose.

His lordship says, that to add rewards and punishments in any of his cases, is to act contrary to the interest of true religion, and in opposition to the maxims on which Christ founded his kingdom: and this surely is a little more than barely saying, so far something of this world is added; for it is saying that this something is added contrary to the interest of true religion, and in opposition to the maxims of Christ. His lord-

ship will not, I presume, maintain that any thing ought or may lawfully be done that is contrary to the interest of true religion and the maxims of Christ; and therefore he does and must maintain that in all the cases mentioned it is unlawful, it is wicked, to apply temporal rewards and punishments.

And now pray consider the cases. The Committee fixed on the two first only; because his lordship might possibly say that the two last refer to matters of mere opinion and persuasion; but of the two first he cannot say so.

The first case supposes the worship of God to be spirit and truth; the second supposes religion to be virtue and charity, under the belief of a supreme governor and judge. Are these matters of opinion or speculation only? Are they not the dictates of reason and nature, as well as laws of the gospel? Are they not essential religion, such as men are bound to, even as they are reasonable creatures, antecedently to any revelation whatever? Are they not laws which all the world are under in virtue of the understanding given them by God? and must the magistrate be excluded merely because these laws are adopted into the gospel, and are become the laws of Christ? The magistrate rules over reasonable creatures, and is justifiable in treating them on a supposition that they are persuaded of what reason teaches; and therefore in these cases he has a right to suppose his subjects persuaded that the worship of God is spirit and truth; and that religion is virtue and charity, under the belief of a supreme governor and judge; and consequently in these cases his rewards and punishments have no view towards creating a persuasion, but merely towards making men do what they know they ought to do.

This must be so, unless any one will say that the magistrate ought to govern his people as supposing them to be brutes, and not men. Besides, does not the practice of virtue and charity take in every thing that affects the happiness and well-being of mankind in this world? and is this no concern of the magistrate's? Because virtue and charity, and the contrary vices, shall be rewarded and punished hereafter, must the world be torn in pieces in the meanwhile without remedy? and will it be sufficient for the magistrate to say, when he is called on to punish the offences against virtue and charity, this is religion;

these are laws of Christ: he has annexed rewards and punishments to them hereafter, and I will have nothing to do with them?

I did not intend to enter so far into the consequences of his lordship's doctrine; but I have done it for the consolation of the letter-writer, who seems wonderfully scared with a consequence drawn by the Committee from this passage. His words are: "the report has charged his lordship's position, just now cited, with setting the worship of God and the neglect of it, religion and irreligion, on an equal foot in this world: one of the most strange and surprising consequences that ever was drawn!" Dear Sir, don't be frightened; the matter shall be made easy to you; the consequence shall be brought home to your door without any trouble to yourself. You see his lordship affirms that "if the very essence of God's worship be spirit and truth; if religion be virtue and charity, &c.; in these cases, to apply force or flattery, worldly pleasure or pain, (that is, in other words, rewards or punishments,) is to act contrary to the interests of true religion, as it is plainly opposite to the maxims on which Christ founded his kingdom." From whence I infer that his lordship is against applying rewards and punishments in these cases, because I cannot suppose his lordship is for doing what is contrary to the interest of true religion, and opposite to the maxims of Christ. And now, pray, Sir, do the two cases stated by his lordship concern the worship of God and religion or no? If you should say they do not, I am sure I should be surprised; if you allow they do, the consequence is very plain, that since the rewards and punishments of this world are not to be applied to the worship of God and religion, "the worship of God and the neglect of it, religion and irreligion, are set on an equal foot in this world." For what is there to make a difference? Force and flattery, pleasure and pain, frowns and discouragements, nay, even negative discouragements, are taken away. Where then is the difference with respect to this world?

The reader now sees what his lordship's doctrine is.

He affirms it to be an invasion of Christ's kingdom for any power on earth to add temporal rewards and punishments to Christ's laws.

That it is contrary to the maxims of Christ to encourage the true worship of God and true religion, or to discourage the contrary, by the sanctions of this world.

And consequently, that it is impious and wicked for any prince to interpose his authority to support true religion and the honor of God in the world.

It is now time to show the reader what I have publicly declared on the same subject; that he may be enabled to decide the weighty controversy of the agreement between the bishop and me, charged in the letter.

In a sermon preached and published long before that referred to by the letter-writer, I thus express myself: "the fear of God and of the king are joined together in Scripture, to show the dependence one has on the other. The only lasting foundation of civil obedience is the fear of God; and the truest interest of princes is to maintain the honor of religion, by which they secure their own." Sermon before the Queen, Jan. 30, 1703-4. p. 1.*

"God requires an external and visible worship from us, in which outward order and decency are required, but not determined, and therefore must be left to their jurisdiction to whom we are answerable for our outward behavior in all things. How far mistaken then is the zeal of those who decline submitting to the orders of the church because they are of human appointment; whereas being ordained by a lawful power, they have so far the stamp of divine authority, as to make disobedience to them a sin against God:" ibid. p. 8.

"The authority of the prince is as much concerned in maintaining the honor and order of God's service as of his own; and the noblest character that belongs to princes is that of nursing fathers and mothers to the church of Christ; the peace and order of which is at once the splendor and security of a government:" ibid. p. 13.

"It is unaccountable in reason that in matters of religious government every man thinks himself judge of what is decent and convenient, and what fit to be obeyed; whereas in matters of civil government, whatever they act, they dare not pretend to

See Vol. iii. p. 258.

the same discretionary power. As if the case were not the same in both; and obedience in all things lawful and honest, (farther than which no man's private judgment extends) in both of like necessity:" ibid. p. 16.

In the year 1713-4 I published a sermon preached before the House of Commons.* The passages of it pertinent to the subject in hand are these.

"The royal authority being the immediate power of God has no more immediate concern than to promote the service and establish the honor of God in the hearts of men; it is but a natural tribute for princes to pay their Maker, to provide that those whom God has made to be their subjects should not cease to be his servants."

To prevent cavils, I desire it may be observed that what I call establishing the honor of God in the hearts of men, in the former part of this passage, I explain in the latter, by providing that they should not cease to be his servants. So that establishing plainly means here maintaining and preserving.

Again: "These advantages can never be wanting under the conduct of a prince who governs in the fear of the Lord. The sense of his own duty, and his regard for the honor of God, will incline him in all cases to promote and encourage the service of his Master; and to fill up that character, which (when justly sustained) is both the ornament and strength of the crown, Defender of the Faith."

These passages shall suffice for the present; and when the letter-writer has reconciled these to the bishop's doctrine, I will look more for him.

But my friend perhaps will say, if you advanced doctrines contrary to those of your 5th of November sermon, before you preached it, and contradicted it afterwards, what is that to me? I charge the doctrines in that sermon with being the same with his lordship's: do you clear them. Rightly admonished; and I obey.

The reader will remember that, in stating this case at first, I observed to him that many points of mere speculation, or such at least as have no direct influence on practical duties, have been

* See Vol. iii. p. 309.

by degrees brought into religion; and churches have divided on those points. These opinions not being general, in virtue of any known principle of reason or uncontested revelation, men will always differ about them. And here arises the difficulty about the magistrate's power: shall he interpose with his authority, and espouse one side in such doubtful cases, and force all into his opinion? or shall he be excluded, and let men's consciences work as they please without control? My way of thinking in this matter I confess, is, that conscience in these cases ought not to be forced, but that men should be at liberty to follow the best light they can get in choosing their opinions. But then to secure the magistrate from being insulted by men who pretend to act according to their conscience; their actions, I think, without any regard had to the principle from whence they arise, ought to be and are subject to the jurisdiction of the magistrate. And it is in this sense that I have said in the sermon more than once, that the magistrate has nothing to do with conscience; that is, he has nothing to do to examine men's conscience, to find the errors of it; and when conscience is pleaded in justification of evil actions, he has nothing to do with it neither; the plea does not lie before him, to be considered as an excuse of the action. And this I have so fully explained, that the letter-writer could not have mistaken had he not chosen to do so.

That this was the true point before me in the sermon of the 5th of November, I will now show. I have already mentioned the occasion of the day, and the practice of the church of Rome, then naturally under consideration; and this alone will make a great difference between his lordship and me, were the case even as it is represented by the letter-writer. He had no such occasion, no such view to plead; he chose his subject; and without regard to, or the least mention of, the church of Rome or her practices, he writes down the magistrate's power in all cases. If our words were the same, yet our meaning was not. I expressly spoke of the exercise of the temporal power as used in the church of Rome; and his lordship as expressly of the exercise of it in all possible cases of religion whatever. I spoke of forcing the conscience; his lordship of inforcing the laws of Christ in matters of natural morality, where conscience cannot

be pleaded. I was against driving men into doubtful or false opinions in opposition to the light of their own minds; his lordship was against encouraging obedience by temporal sanctions, to those laws which the light of the mind cannot reject.

But I quit this plea; I have no occasion for it.

It will be allowed me, I suppose, that in choosing the heads of discourse, I had regard to the subject I intended to consider; now with respect to our Saviour's reason for the exclusion of temporal power in matters of religion, I say,

1. "I shall show that it holds in all cases, with respect to church power;" that is, that the church, as such, has no temporal power. Under this head the letter-writer found some strong expressions against temporal power in matters of religion; and what I said with respect to the church's right of using such power, he has confronted with the bishop's declarations in regard to the magistrate's right; and the unwary reader is led to think we mean the same thing, when we are speaking on two very different subjects. But this will appear by and by. The second is,

2. "That the argument does not affect the civil magistrate's power, nor tie up his hands from interposing with the civil sword in matters proper for his jurisdiction; however they may be pretended to be allied to religion."

Can the reader think that, if I had intended to speak of the laws of Christ, of pure essential worship and moral religion, that I should have used such an expression, ("however they may be pretended to be allied to religion,") of any actions flowing from them? No: it is plain then that I meant to speak of such points of conscience only, as often do produce very evil effects in the world; and of these effects I properly said, "they are pretended to be allied to religion;" that is, because they arise from conscience and opinion.

It will appear to any body who will be at the trouble to read the sermon, that I all along consider these points of conscience under these two views: 1. as residing in the mind (in which case I call them "matters purely of a religious nature,") where the magistrate ought not to touch them: 2. as breaking out into ill practices, which the magistrate may lawfully punish. On this distinction the whole sermon is founded. But had I

considered these points as pure religion, could I have put the case of their growing out into actions worthy of punishment? It is plain I could not from the reason of the thing; and it is plain I did not from these express words in the sermon: "the civil magistrate is of this world, and the affairs of it are his proper care; from which he ought not to be excluded by any pretences of religion: nor will this bring any men under difficulty on the account of pure religion, which never interferes with the magistrate's rights." The reader will observe the distinction between pretences of religion and pure religion; and that the former expression describes the subject I was treating on; the latter, that religion which I here declare was not within the argument, and could not therefore be affected by it. I beg leave to transcribe one passage of the sermon, which will clear this point, and show on what subject I was treating; whether the laws of Christ and pure religion, or doubtful opinions and speculations in matters of faith.

The words are: "As to mere difference in opinion, which ends only in speculation, or influences only the internal acts of the mind, or produces only such external acts as no way concern the public peace; I see not how the magistrate can interest himself in them: but wherever difference of opinion is attended with consequences that may affect the state, how can it stand with reason or public good to exclude the magistrate's power in such cases?"

Am I here speaking of the laws of Christ; of the very essence of God's worship, spirit and truth; or of religion considered as virtue and charity, under the belief of a supreme governor and judge? If I am not, how can the bishop and I be made to agree in one point, when it is evident we are treating of two intirely distinct and opposite? His lordship expressly throws out of his subject all declarations and decisions of men, and speaks of the laws of the kingdom as Christ left them: I speak of men's opinions, mistakes in their judgment, and errors of their conscience.

And are we not now in a hopeful way of agreement? His lordship argues "that if the church of Christ be the kingdom of Christ, it is essential to it that Christ himself be the sole lawgiver and sole judge, that all his subjects in what sta-

tion soever, (that is, whether they be civil or ecclesiastical powers,) are equally without authority to judge, censure, or punish, the servants of another master, in matters relating purely to conscience or salvation."

My inference from the same principle is, that the church hath no temporal power; and with respect to the civil magistrate, I most expressly guard against the use his lordship has made of his text in these words; "but it ought to be remembered that the arguments drawn from the nature of religion and of Christ's spiritual kingdom against the use of temporal punishments, are conclusive only as to the ministers of that kingdom, and cannot extend to the civil magistrate." Sermon of the 5th of November.

The agreement, you see, draws on apace.

But if this, all this, is not sufficient to show the true view of my sermon, I have one evidence more to produce, and he no willing one, I assure you; even the letter-writer himself. His evidence stands thus: it is very plain to him that his lordship and I agree; and at p. 18. he says his lordship asserts "that to apply force, &c. in order to make men profess this or that opinion (for this is evidently his meaning) is to act," &c. Now, Sir, if his lordship and I agree; if his lordship in your opinion spoke of rewards and punishments only as they are applied in order to make men profess this or that opinion; I humbly hope that I may have leave to say, that even in your judgment I speak of temporal power only as it is applied in order to make men profess this or that opinion.

Whether his lordship means as the letter-writer says he does, has been already examined, and proved that he does not.

Suppose now that the passages produced out of his lordship's sermon and out of mine do agree in words, yet what is this towards showing that his lordship and I are in the same sentiments, since he speaks of one thing and I of another? Should I say the king has no authority, evidently meaning in Italy or Spain; should another say, the king has no authority, as evidently meaning in Great Britain or Ireland; would the letter-writer say we agreed; that my words had the same ill tendency that the others had; that I as directly impeached the king's lawful supremacy as the other? If he would not say it in that

case, why does he say it in this, which is exactly the same. The bishop says the civil magistrate has no authority to add temporal punishments in matters of religion: I say the church has no authority to add them. His lordship speaks of the laws of Christ as he left them: I speak of differences in opinions; of matters of speculation; of mistakes and errors of conscience. His lordship speaks of increasing the penalties, to make those obey the law who are already subjects of Christ; that is, who are willingly and sincerely persuaded of the law: I speak of forcing the assent in matters of difference. His lordship is against negative discouragements: I am against positive punishments. And yet it seems we are both of the same mind.

I might very well rest the matter here, and leave the world to judge between us. But to clear the matter once for all, (which I never intend to meddle with more,) I will examine the particular passages produced by the letter-writer.

The first passage produced out of my sermon is in p. 8.

"It is just reasoning, I think, to infer from the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, and the spiritual power of his ministers on earth, that temporal punishments are not proper to inforce the laws and edicts of Christ's kingdom; for since the kingdom is not of this world, the powers belonging to this kingdom cannot be of this world."

This passage stands under the first head; which was to show that the church as such is not intitled to the exercise of temporal powers; and the very passage itself speaks as much, concluding that the powers belonging to this kingdom (that is, the powers of the church) cannot be of this world.

The next is under the same head too.

"If the authority be of this world, it must be supported by the power of this world." To this I must add the passage quoted in the letter, p. 17. and marked Number VII.; for though set at such a distance in the letter, it is part of the same paragraph, and relates to the same argument. The words are:

"And consequently those who are for throwing all spiritual power out of the church, and introducing into the room of it a power derived from the civil magistrate, must, to exempt the consciences of men from a spiritual jurisdiction, submit them to a temporal, *and leave them to truckle to the power of the*

sword; which is in its consequence, whatever it may be in its principle, downright popery." The words in the italic character are omitted by the letter-writer.

To what purpose these passages are quoted I cannot imagine: they have no reference to the question in debate, but are part of an argument brought to assert the spiritual jurisdiction of the church. There are some, we know, who, to destroy the spiritual authority of the church, deny that the church is derived from the institutions of Christ or his Apostles, and assert it to be a mere creature of the state. And their conclusion is right; for if the church be derived from a temporal power, she can claim from that no spiritual jurisdiction: but then these men are equally (if not more) zealous against the temporal power of the church as against the spiritual. To them therefore I argue; if the church be derived from the state, it must derive a power from the state for its support; as all civil societies and incorporations have, in virtue of their incorporation, some civil power for their own preservation: therefore I say, in the first passage, "if the authority be of this world, it must be supported by the power of this world;" that is, if the church derives all her authority from the state, she must have a state (temporal) power to support that authority. On which I infer in the second passage: "consequently those who are for throwing all spiritual power out of the church, and introducing into the room of it a power derived from the civil magistrate, must, to exempt the consciences of men from a spiritual jurisdiction, (which is their aim,) submit them to a temporal; which is in its consequences—downright popery." That is, to give the church as such a temporal power, which is the consequence of deriving her authority from the state, is downright popery. And now what is this to the purpose? Is here one word about the magistrate's power in matters of religion; or any thing parallel to what the bishop says except the mere sound of words? But let us go on.

The next passage is in p. 12. of the letter, and 8 of the sermon. The passage stands thus in the letter.

"'My kingdom is not of this world.' This may serve to show the meaning and extent of our Saviour's argument, and how contrary it is to the genius and spirit of the Christian religion to found its faith in temporal punishments. The powers

which are derived to the church from Christ the head are purely spiritual; the punishments she inflicts are of the same nature, and the effect of them is generally suspended till the offender comes to another world."

This passage likewise stands under the first head in the sermon, which was to show that the church has no temporal powers as such; and the passage speaks only of the powers derived to the church from Christ the head. And what has this to do in a debate about the magistrate? Because the church has no temporal power, will it follow that the magistrate has none? If not, why was this place produced at all?

But here the letter-writer has shown his art and his sincerity at once: the bishop deduces all his doctrine, with respect to the no authority of the church and magistrate, from this single sentence, 'my kingdom is not of this world.' The letter-writer thought it to his purpose that I should do so too; and therefore he has added at the beginning of this passage taken from my sermon, 'my kingdom is not of this world;' whereas I begin a new distinct paragraph with these words, (and refer back, not to a single text, but to all I had said on the subject,) 'this may serve to show,' &c. The paragraph before does not end with those words, 'my kingdom is not of this world,' but with these, 'now is my kingdom not from hence:' and they stand joined to what goes before, and not introducing what follows in the passage quoted.*

At this rate my friend may make me agree with whom he pleases: if he meant me an honor, I have reason to excuse his zeal, but I desire for the future that he would serve me in an honester way.

The next passage is in page 12. of the letter, and p. 12. of the sermon. "The truth of the matter lies in a very narrow compass: the church has no right to impose penal laws on any account: in matters purely of a religious nature, the state has no right neither."

I overlook the false pointing of this passage in the letter; it does me no other injury than making nonsense of my words; and that I can forgive. The stress of the quotation lies in the last words: "in matters purely of a religious nature, the state has no right neither."

* See Vol. iii. p. 298.

I have already told the reader what I mean by matters purely of a religious nature in this debate; that I distinguish between opinions in religious matters considered only as they affect the consciences of men, and as they come to show themselves in practices of ill consequence to public peace. In the former case I call them matters purely of a religious nature, and have expressly distinguished them in this sermon from pure essential religion. And if my friend had looked to the end of the passage, the beginning of which he here produces, he would have seen my meaning; for of these matters of purely a religious nature I say: "of such matters perhaps there may be great scarcity in the world; for the passions of men work themselves into their religious concerns; and the controversy grows insensibly into a struggle for power and superiority; and it becomes him (the magistrate) to stir and to drive conscience out of the state to its proper seat, the heart of man; whither his power neither can nor ought to follow it." Now the matters of purely a religious nature in the beginning of the passage, in which the state has no right, must be the same with those in the end of it, which the magistrate's power neither can nor ought to follow; and these are declared to be points of conscience, whilst they are in their proper seat, the heart of man.

It is true indeed that the expressions, 'matters of purely a religious nature,' and 'pure religion,' are too near a-kin in sound, whilst they stand for such different ideas. But, alas! I am not arrived to an authority that will bear me out in discarding old words and coining new ones; or raising new images to represent old notions; and therefore must be content to speak as the world speaks, and shift as well as I can with the difficulties of my mother-tongue. It is observable, however, that in the use the letter-writer makes of this passage, he has thought fit to leave out the word 'purely.' This being the first good office he has done me, I ought to thank him for it; for considering the use that has been made of this and words of the like import, I am very willing to part with my share of them; though the letter-writer, for a reason which he and I know, ought to have shown more tenderness to such a significant word.

The next passage is in p. 15. of the letter, p. 6. of the sermon.

"The honor of God is best consulted by complying with the gracious designs of his Providence; and the honor of religion best secured by promoting the ends of it. And since our Saviour has told us that the design of his coming into the world, and the end of the religion he taught, was not to destroy but to save men's lives, there can be no greater indignity offered to God, no greater contempt shown of Christ, or blemish cast on religion, than to make religion, which was designed to save men, the means and instrument of destroying them. The argument reaches to all methods of propagating religion which are hurtful or injurious to men, as well as merely to the destroying them by the fire and sword; for the Son of man no more came to injure and abuse men than he did to destroy them; and the argument is equally strong against injuring or abusing our fellow-creatures in order to propagate the faith, as it is against destroying them."

This passage is at the very beginning of the first head of discourse, intended to exclude the church, as such, from temporal power; I put the plea for temporal power in the church in the same manner that the church of Rome puts it: "the whole weight of the argument lies on the honor of God and religion; from which topic the doctrine of extirpating heretics fetches its main support." I answer this plea in the words above: extirpating heretics by church power was the case in view, which I show to be inconsistent with the honor of God and religion; and say expressly that this argument holds with respect to all methods of propagating religion that are hurtful and injurious. And what then? Propagating religion is one thing, and punishing men for actions against the plain laws of Christ, to which they own themselves subject, is another. It is one thing to say that it is opposite to the maxims of Christ to encourage by temporal rewards religion as it is virtue and charity; which his lordship affirms in the passage set opposite to this in the letter; and another to say, as I do, that the faith is not to be propagated by hurting or abusing men.

In order to remove an objection against what I here say of

injuring and abusing men, I state it myself in the next words after the passage.

" It is true that all punishments do not come under the notion of injuries or abuses, since many are calculated for the benefit of offenders," &c.

I answer this by saying, that " however good a reason this may be for exercising temporal punishments in the cause of religion, it can signify nothing in the present case; unless the church be vested with a power of dispensing temporal punishments; for this reason cannot create a power where it is not."

What then was the present case in which I was concerned? Have I not plainly expressed it to be, whether the church were vested with temporal power? And what is this to the letter-writer's point? I am speaking of the power of the church; his lordship of the power of the civil magistrate; and my good friend says we both speak of the same thing.

The next passage is part of this very argument, and follows the words last quoted: it is guarded before and behind against all mistakes but wilful ones.

After having said, " this reason cannot create a power (in the church) where it is not; it can only direct the exercise of it (that is, in the magistrate's hand) where it is;" I add the passage quoted by the letter: " and therefore, to those who urge the conveniency of temporal punishments in matters of religion, we answer with our blessed Saviour, ' ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.' The kingdom of Christ is not of this world, nor is it to be erected or supported by worldly power." Here the letter ends. I go on: " he has not intrenched on the civil magistrate's authority, or granted any part of their commission to his disciples."

I can make this passage no plainer: if my friend cannot see that I speak here of church power, and not of civil power, I have no help for him.

The passage in page 17 of the letter has been considered already: the five next and only remaining passages made use of by the letter-writer are:

1. " Thus much is certain; the magistrate has no right to punish men for the mistakes in their judgment, or errors of their conscience."

2. "They lay it down for a maxim that the magistrate has nothing to do with conscience, which is very true."

3. "The magistrate has nothing to do with conscience; and therefore on one hand he has no right to bring conscience to his bar to punish the errors or mistakes of it, or to censure even the actions which proceed from it, unless they affect the public good."

4. "The ministers of Christ are not of this world; and therefore they have no right to extend their master's kingdom by the exercise of worldly or temporal power. The civil magistrate is of this world, and the affairs of it are his proper care."

5. "The magistrate might well say—conscience I have nothing to do with."

These passages all relate to one and the same argument; and the letter-writer has picked them up just as he thought most convenient to his present purpose, well knowing that the subject of the argument was nothing to his purpose. The argument is to assert the magistrate's right to punish the evil actions of men, notwithstanding that such actions may be the effect of a misguided conscience; and I have shown that this right is consistent with all just claims that can be made in behalf of conscience. In this case the conscience is supposed erroneous, and to lead to evil practices; and therefore I think here is nothing that can be paralleled with the bishop's cases, of the worship of God in spirit and truth, or religion considered as virtue and charity. The great fault that I find with the plea for liberty of conscience, as it is commonly used, is, that men do not really plead for liberty of conscience, but for a liberty of action; that is, a liberty to do whatever they shall think fit to say their conscience persuades them to. The principle they go on is this, the magistrate has nothing to do with conscience. I allow them their principle, and show them that it will not serve their purpose, or exclude the magistrate from punishing the ill actions of men, however they may plead conscience. And now I will produce the intire argument as it stands in the sermon, and distinguish the passages produced by the letter-writer in a different character, and so leave it to the reader's judgment.

"In this question of the magistrate's right, it matters not what a man's opinions are, or how well or how ill a man's conscience is informed; for *thus much is certain, that the magistrate has no right to punish men for the mistakes in their judgment, or the errors of their consciences.* On the other side, when the magistrate calls a man to an account for his actions, I cannot see that it is so much as his duty to inquire whether the man took what he did to be a part of his religion, or whether he followed the dictates of his conscience or no. What can the civil magistrate have to do in such questions; or how can he arrive at any evidence concerning the truth of these matters? The nature of the action lies properly before him, considered in itself and in its consequences; and if it tend to mischief, to breed disturbance in the state, he has a right to punish it without considering whether it be a religious action or no.

"There would need no disputing in this case if men would attend to the just consequences of their own principles. *They lay it down for a maxim, that the magistrate has nothing to do with conscience, which is very true;* but then they infer that the magistrate cannot punish men for acting according to their conscience; which is to say, that his authority is suspended by the plea of conscience: and if so, the magistrate, I think, will have more than enough to do with it; since the people's conscience will bind his power in the exercise of the sword, and he must of necessity in the administration of justice enter into the examination of conscience; for since that is to be his rule, he ought to know and to consider it.

"But if you will attend to the natural and just consequences of the principle, the truth will stand in a clear light. *The magistrate has nothing to do with conscience; and therefore on one hand he has no right to bring conscience to his bar, to punish the errors or mistakes of it; or to censure even the actions which proceed from it, unless they affect,* that which is his immediate care, *the public good,* or the private peace and property of his subjects: on the other hand, no one else can bring conscience before him, or by the pleas of it supersede his authority in any case proper for his cognisance. For *the magistrate might well say,* the action is such as I am concerned to inquire into; *conscience I have nothing to do with;* it does not lie before me,

and therefore I shall not attend to its pretences. Nor indeed is it possible that he should, since it is in every man's power in all cases to plead conscience; which is never more easily pretended to than by those who have none. A man under a criminal accusation might as well refer himself to what was done in the Mogul's country, as to what passed at that time in his own unsearchable heart; and the magistrate might with much more reason admit the evidence in one case than in the other, where there is no possibility of knowing the truth."*

The passage marked Numb. 4. is only a recapitulation of this argument, and is to the same purpose. The letter-writer has stopped short in the middle of a sentence; but this is a small matter among friends. Read then the last sentence of the passage thus: "the civil magistrate is of this world, and the affairs of it are his proper care, from which he ought not to be excluded by any pretences or pleas of religion."

The laws of Christ as he left them; the essence of God's worship; religion as it is virtue and charity; are no pretences or pleas of religion: of the former the bishop speaks throughout his sermon; of the latter I speak, and let the world judge how we agree.

I have now gone through the letter, and all in it that relates to my sermon. The only satisfaction I can make the world for troubling them so long in so trivial a matter, is to promise that I will never do so again. I have stated his lordship's sense and my own: if the letter-writer does not like it, he is at liberty to write on as he thinks fit. I am not at such a loss to employ my time as to be willing to attend on every call of this nature. These small attacks are but the excrescences of a controversy, and not worth regarding: I say not this in order to decline any service that I owe and can perform to the church or the Convocation, which now cannot speak for itself. When his lordship publishes his Answer, I shall be neither afraid nor ashamed to own the cause, or to take a share in the common defence of the Representation of the Committee, in which I concurred.

And I cannot but wonder to see with how much anger the Committee is treated for seeing what all the world sees as well

* See Vol. iii. p. 302-3.

as they: friends and foes agree in his lordship's meaning: look into the Layman's Letter of Thanks, the Anatomy of the Convocation, &c.

These are his lordship's admirers, and praise his doings; and they praise him for doing the very thing which the Convocation blames in him: both agree in their sense, though not in their resentments, of his lordship's doctrine.

The two authors mentioned both set out with the same happy thought, declaring that it was no surprise to them that the Lower-House of Convocation resented the bishop's doctrine, because it has touched them in the tender part. His lordship now says that he touched them not in any part, but published only a doctrine against popery, which they all agree in. How will his lordship's friends like this? Will they not think themselves deserted? Or how can his lordship like their treatment of him, when he complains so heavily of others? Why have not they been rebuked for mistaking and misrepresenting his lordship's opinion? Or why has the Committee? Was the Convocation only bound to be blind? Was it commendable in those who liked the doctrine and the tendency, to understand his lordship's meaning, and publicly to thank him for daring "to appear against the current of corrupt leaders, who are every day running us back again into the worst part of popery:" (Second Letter of Thanks, p. 2.) And was it so outrageous an injury for those to see it, who cannot, if they will maintain the trust reposed in them, be silent under such an attack on the rights of the Christian church and the Christian magistrate? For my own part I heartily wish to have these wounds closed up again; I should rejoice to see his lordship cleared of the charge he is under for the sake of the church of which he is a bishop, and for his own sake; and I wish him nothing worse than that he may take the methods proper to these ends.

Those he must choose himself; but should he resolve to insist on the justification of his sermon, he will find (if I have any judgment) that he has a matter of another nature on his hands than ever yet he was engaged in.

And here I would beg leave to make use of this opportunity,

of observing what sort of answer his lordship is preparing to the Representation, according to his own account of it in his reply to Dr. Snape. His lordship's account is:

"I have taught men (and I here declare I will go on to teach them) to receive no commands in matters relating to their eternal salvation from any superiors, whether spiritual or temporal, absolutely and implicitly, on the ground of mere authority, without examining them by the laws of Christ, and finding them agreeable to those laws:—

"All this, which I have been now saying, will appear still more clearly, if possible, in the answer which I am preparing to the Representation of the Committee of the Lower House of Convocation."

For whose use this answer is preparing I profess I cannot imagine, or what purpose it is to serve, unless to blind the eyes of the world, and to lead them off from the true point to one which his lordship can better deal with. His lordship would be glad to have the world about him think that the whole controversy is about authority to interpret and impose laws absolutely, unlimitedly, unconditionally, &c. But here his lordship fights without an adversary; and he might as well answer the Representation by proving there is no philosopher's stone, as by proving there is no absolute unlimited authority to interpret or make laws for Christians. The Representation has but once mentioned the interpreting the laws of Christ, and then only with respect to the Apostles of Christ, who on his lordship's principles are equally, with others, excluded this authority of interpretation.

The charge in the Representation is, that his lordship's doctrines tend to subvert all government and discipline in the church of Christ.

Can there be no government where there is no absolute authority to interpret laws? Can there be no discipline, without unlimited, unconditional submission to the dictates of mere authority? If there cannot, there is an end of all government in the world, for such absolute, unlimited, such mere authority, there is none, either civil or ecclesiastical. But if these things do not necessarily go together; if government and discipline may be carried on without such mere authority; then the

Committee might charge his lordship with subverting government and discipline in the church, without claiming to themselves such mere authority, or blaming him for writing against it: and if so, his lordship may write a folio against absolute authority, and yet the case will stand as it does: it will still remain a question, after all he can say on that subject, whether his doctrines tend or no to subvert the government and discipline of the church? To make this plain, I will put a case: it shall be that of the incestuous Corinthian. His crime is known; and every one may see in Holy Writ what the Apostle thought proper discipline in his case. Suppose then the very same case should happen in any Christian church now. I ask, is there an authority in the church to excommunicate such a person? that is, to exclude him from the Christian assembly, and to deny him the use of the sacraments. If you say no, you do what the Committee charges on his lordship, subvert the discipline of the church; if you say yes, you allow the discipline: but then (according as his lordship intends to answer the Representation) you will be told that you claim an absolute, unconditional, unlimited, and mere authority to make and interpret laws for Christians; and either this is a just charge, or his lordship's answer will not be a just answer to the Representation.

The Representation has produced out of his lordship's sermon some passages where the doctrines which are conceived to subvert the government of the church, and those relating to absolute authority, are mixed together: the Committee fix their charge on the former; his lordship will answer to the latter; and no doubt but the world about us will improve by the contoversy.

To these passages the Committee added (to prevent mistakes) short observations of their own, which were intended to point to the thing they found fault with. After the first passage cited, they say: "it seems to deny all authority to the church; and under pretence of exalting the kingdom of Christ, to leave it without any visible human authority to judge, censure, or punish offenders in the affairs of conscience or salvation."

Is here any thing about mere authority? any claim to a right of absolute interpretation? No: but his lordship affirms "that Christ is the sole judge of the behavior of his subjects in the

affairs of conscience and eternal salvation;" that is, as he explains himself, "in all points relating to the favor or displeasure of Almighty God." We say that Christ is not sole judge of the behavior, &c.; for the church has a right to judge of the behavior of men with respect to the laws of Christ, which are points most certainly relating to the favor or displeasure of Almighty God. Behavior takes in the external actions of men with regard to the law they are under; and it is one thing to judge the behavior of men by a plain law, acknowleged and received by the offender himself; and it is another thing to pretend to a power to interpret absolutely, unlimitedly, &c. the doubtful or obscure laws.

With respect to this right of judging his lordship has added no limitation: 'absolutely' and 'properly' stand in the same period, but referred to other matters. His lordship uses the word 'absolutely' when applied to interpreters, and when applied to judges, in a very different sense. He says of interpreters, there are none who can interpret 'absolutely;' but of judges he says, there are 'absolutely' none to judge. You shall have his own words: "Let him but ask himself whether the church of Christ be the kingdom of Christ or not? And if it be, whether this notion of it doth not absolutely exclude all other legislators and judges in matters relating to conscience and the favor of God?" His lordship has such plenty of absolutely's and properly's, that he will excuse me, I know, if I claim this (absolutely) for the use of the Committee.

I do not intend to enter farther into this matter than is necessary to show that the argument his lordship is preparing against absolute authority, will not come up to the point of the Representation; and therefore the many passages in his sermon to the same purpose shall rest till a fitter opportunity.

But his lordship tells us, in his Answer to Dr. Snape, that all he has taught amounts only to a denial of absolute authority. I will give the proposition he has taught in his own words; and it is drawn up as circumspectly and securely as if it were a conveyance of lands. "Christ is sole lawgiver and judge in matters of eternal salvation, and hath delegated no absolute, that is, unlimited authority to men, to which Christians are absolutely, that is, unlimitedly, unconditionally, without exa-

mination, to submit. This is all I have taught." Alas! why has all this flame been raised about nothing? about a doctrine which is not disputed? Was it for this and this only that his lordship's sermon was introduced with so solid an observation on the abuse of words; which have "insensibly varied by passing through many mouths, and by being taken and given by multitudes in common discourse, till they come to stand for a complication of notions as distant from the original intention of them, nay, as contradictory to it, as darkness is to light?" Was it for this that his audience was awakened with his proclaiming his open and undisguised zeal against an "evil invading the most sacred and important subjects, touching the very vitals of all that is good, and just going to take from men's eyes the boundaries of right and wrong?" Was it for this that four instances were given of such abuse of words, to prepare the way for the fifth, the grand abuse of all, even of the word church? which his lordship tells us has "been so diversified by the various alterations it hath undergone, that it is almost impossible so much as to number up the many inconsistent images that have come by daily additions to be united together in it;" and therefore he lays church aside, and sets up a "new image, which hath not been so much used, nor consequently so much defaced." Was all this only in order to inform us of what every body knew and believed before? Had his lordship no other view, methinks the word church might have served the purpose then as well as it had done two hundred years before; in all which time the word had been innocently used without claiming absolute power. And indeed (as far as I can see) the notion of church is farther removed from absolute authority than the notion of kingdom. Kingdom, in the very sound of it, carries more power than church; and I believe his lordship is the first who ever thought of setting up a kingdom merely for the sake of pulling down authority. Besides his lordship owns that no such notion as that of absolute authority was joined to the word church by any of those for whose use the sermon can be supposed to be preached or printed: "his brethren," the bishops, he believes, "disclaim and disdain it." So do "all, even every man of the church of England;

every man of those themselves who have treated me in the same unhandsome manner on this account." Answer to Dr. Snape, p. 41. 42.

And his lordship professes seriously that he "never knew nor heard of any church on earth, except the church of Rome in its latter corrupted state, which ever dared to claim such an absolute authority:" ibid p. 39.

And was this notion, which every man of the church of England, as well clergy as laity, rejects; was this the evil to be opposed with an open and undisguised zeal? Was this evil, which it seems nobody is infected with, the very thing which "touched the vitals of all that is good, and was just going to take from men's eyes the boundaries of right and wrong?"

No, no; this was not the secret: his lordship has been too long a writer to make so great an apparatus introductive of nothing. But be it as it will: if his lordship can prove that his doctrines do not tend to subvert the government and discipline of the church; that it is consistent with his opinion that the church may censure men for their behavior with respect to the laws of Christ; notwithstanding he has affirmed that Christ is the sole judge of their behavior in matters of salvation;—that spiritual governors may judge, censure, and punish offenders in matters of religion; notwithstanding he has affirmed "that no one of Christ's subjects, in what station soever they may be, hath authority to judge, censure, or punish the servants of another master (that is, Christians) in matters relating purely to conscience or salvation;" (and to salvation, the plainest, the moral laws of the gospel do relate):—if in these points his lordship can make room for a judge on earth, after declaring that in these points "Christ must be judge alone, or not at all:"—if he can exhort men to pay any regard to their spiritual teachers and pastors, after declaring that the "more close and immediate their regard is to Christ, the more certainly and the more evidently true it is that they are of his kingdom:"—if he can teach men to reverence those who are over them in the Lord, after having exhorted them "to show themselves subjects to Christ in the affair of salvation, without fear of man's judgment:"—if his lordship, I say, can show these

things to be consistent, and that his doctrines do not tend to set men loose from all church discipline, he may then answer the Representation; and I shall be ready among the foremost to own my ignorance and weakness, and to beg his lordship's pardon.

SUMMARY.

NOTICE taken of the receipt of the bishop's postscript, and of the apparent agreement between his doctrines and those of the dean. Consideration of the bishop's complaint concerning the dean's suspicions that he encouraged the letter-writer, by which his lordship was brought into the debate: also of the dean's manner of writing, and his directing the bishop in what sense he is to understand his own words. The dean's design in his explications was plainly declared, but mistaken by the bishop. The merits of the cause are now brought into question. The dean's answer to a charge made by the bishop, that he is represented as writing down the magistrate's power in all cases: also to another, in which the natural consequences of the whole tenor of his lordship's sermon are perverted, and he is represented as saying, that the magistrate has no obligation to reward the outward practice of what is good for human society, or to punish the contrary. The cause of complaint on this charge is removed. It is next considered whether the consequences charged on his lordship's doctrine do really belong to it or not. It is stated that the bishop throughout his argument calls an action a law, though properly speaking, a law is a rule of action: this done in order that the same law, as enacted by Christ, and as encouraged by the magistrate, might be considered as two different laws. Passages quoted from his lordship's work establishing this principle. The dean shows, first, that it is not true that outward actions, as they affect society only, are the matter of human laws: secondly, that the account given by the bishop divests the civil magistrate and his laws of all moral rectitude.

The argument by which the bishop proves the service done to the magistrate in his sermon, is next considered. A passage quoted by the dean from one of his sermons indicating his own doctrine on the points in question. Notice taken of a syllogism of the dean's, misrepresented by the bishop. Notwithstanding his lordship's rebuke, the dean ventures on another syllogism in the following terms: "the laws of reason and the moral laws of God are the same; but the bishop affirms that the laws of Christ are the same as to the matter only with the laws of reason; therefore the laws of Christ are the same as to the matter only with the laws of God." Another passage in the bishop's postscript considered, in which he says that a person may maintain the maxims or motives of this world to be contrary to those motives on which Christ's kingdom was founded by himself, without maintaining either that worldly motives always destroy all true religion, or that it is wicked in any to apply them in those points which he truly intended in his sermon, &c. Another point considered, in which the bishop falsely claims a concession, as made by the dean, relating to Christ's authority. Opinion of the Committee of the Lower House of Convocation on the point of absolute authority cleared. Committee vindicated in their quotation of passages from his lordship's sermon. The bishop answered respecting two allegations made from secret history. A compliment made by the bishop on the dean's abilities noticed: grounds on which it is rejected. Complaint respecting the dean's manner of examining an argument answered. The dean expresses reasons for his being surprised that the bishop should add a postscript, and thereby his authority, to such a letter. The bishop's unjust treatment of Dr. Snape, by misrepresenting a passage of his, stated and commented on. The bishop is asked, finally, whether he will be answerable for his friend's defence of his doctrine? Two instances given of this friend's ill-managed defence. Conclusion.

SOME CONSIDERATIONS

OCCASIONED BY A POSTSCRIPT FROM THE RIGHT REVEREND THE LORD BISHOP OF BANGOR TO THE DEAN OF CHICHESTER, OFFERED TO HIS LORDSHIP.

MY LORD,

I received the favor of your lordship's postscript; and though I should have been better pleased to have heard from your lordship in any other way, yet I shall always show a respect to your commands in whatever method you think fit to communicate them; especially since I have learned from your lordship what great matters must be affected by the success of your defence. I am glad, my lord, your views are so extended since the preaching of your sermon, and that you have now such great ones before you in the defence of it. Your lordship tells me that every one will see our agreement more and more plainly every day; and indeed I conceive some hopes of it, from observing how this great point begins to clear up.

In other matters the agreement may be longer a-coming; but I am so far from despairing of it, that I give your lordship this trouble in order to promote it, by showing your lordship the reasons why I cannot concur with you in some doctrines advanced in this postscript; hoping that they may appear so clear to your lordship, or be so clearly answered by your lordship, that they may no longer divide us.

In what I have to say I shall follow the order and method of the postscript; and the rather, that the world may observe the labyrinth in this case (if any there be) to be of your lordship's contrivance, and not of mine.

Your lordship begins with complaining "that any suspicion of your having been the author or encourager of the former

letter to me (which you assure me you were not) should have carried me manifestly out of my way, from my own defence, to bring you and your future defence into my debate."

My suspicions, my lord, shall make no part of the controversy between your lordship and me. Whatever they were in this case, they came not into my answer; and it is only your lordship's suspicion that they are chargeable with carrying me manifestly out of my way.

I am at a loss to know why your lordship complains to me that you were brought into the debate. Ask your friend the letter-writer the reason; it was he brought you in, and not I. His charge was, that my doctrine was the same with your lordship's. Was I at liberty to answer him or no? If I was, could it be done without considering your lordship's doctrine as well as my own? Was it then going out of the way to examine the doctrines which gave occasion to the debate, and were the main subject of it? As to your future defence, my lord, I brought it not into the debate, nor was I diverted by it from the subject of my own defence. Whoever will but look into my answer, may see that I said nothing of your lordship's future defence, until I had gone through with my own, and the debate was over. Your lordship perhaps may judge that I was not able to defend myself; but you cannot but see that I was not diverted from it to bring you or your future defence into the debate.

Your lordship complains farther in this paragraph of my manner of writing, and thanks me for directing you in what sense you are to understand your own words.

As to my manner, my lord, it is the common misfortune of those who have appeared in this controversy not to have given satisfaction in their manner of writing: I am sorry it is mine; but this may be perhaps *naturæ vitium, non animi;* men must write as they can, or else be silent. But I shall have occasion to resume this subject before I take leave of your lordship, and shall therefore say no more of it here.

As for your lordship's thanks for my directions in what sense you are to understand your own words; though I should be glad to merit your lordship's thanks for any service I could do you; yet in this, my lord, you have been bountiful beyond

my deserts. I will do myself the honor to say that I am not altogether such a stranger to your lordship's manner of writing as not to be able to guess sometimes what is likely to afford you matter of complaint. I foresaw this occasion, and took all possible care to prevent it. I will repeat my own words, and leave the reader to judge what directions I gave your lordship in this matter. "I shall show his lordship's opinion from the sense which his words *seem to me* to carry; not intending hereby to preclude his lordship from any other sense or meaning which he shall think fit to insist on." I humbly hope, my lord, that your complaint of my manner in general may be founded on a like misapprehension of my design; and that it may be rather my misfortune than my fault to be under your displeasure.

The observations which I offered on your future defence are grounded on your own account of it; and I do not find by any thing your lordship has said, that I mistook your meaning in it. And pray, my lord, where is the offence of telling your lordship beforehand what you must have been told after the publication of the answer, when you would have heard it less patiently? Your lordship calls this immediately a happiness arising from the delay of your answer: how happy your lordship is in it I cannot tell; but I meant it as an instance of that fairness with which I think all controversy should be conducted. It would serve the purpose of an adversary much better if your lordship would be pleased to write a book nothing to the purpose; but it would serve the cause of truth much worse. I have done you no injury, my lord, in telling you what the true point of the Representation is; you are still at liberty to write on any other point, and call it too an Answer to the Representation, if you think it proper so to do. The uneasiness your lordship expresses at being told the true point, shows how unwilling you are to come to it, how very loth to part with the noble subject of absolute authority; an opinion which, I perceive, your adversaries must hold whether they will or no, in order to make way for your lordship's future victory and triumph. This is so necessary, it seems, to your lordship's defence, that you cannot in your conscience and judgment wholly part with it: your judgment I admire; for it is much

better for your lordship to write against absolute authority than against the point I proposed to you from the Representation; but that you should find yourself at all obliged in conscience to believe the Representation or those who drew it, to be maintainers of absolute authority, must be ascribed, I presume, to the value you put on those great things which depend on the vigor of your defence. But your lordship, however, promises "to regard my explications as far as is consistent with the declared design and honor of the Committee itself."

My design in those explications was very plainly declared; and yet I see your lordship has mistaken it, and raised in yourself and readers a strange idea of the Representation; and have by my help (as you imagine) found out what otherwise neither you nor the world could possibly have discovered. The honor of the discovery is your lordship's own; I had no hand in it, as I will show your lordship when I come to page 90 of your postscript, where your lordship insults the Committee and me together, and makes us pay too dear in conscience for your mistake. In the meantime I am prepared to bear patiently all the resentment which shall arise from the honor your lordship has for the Committee; and when you argue against my explications from this topic, if I can find how to distinguish that part, I shall be very ready in my turn to show a particular respect to it.

We come now to the merits of the cause. And the first thing I meet with is a very great mistake charged on my Representation of your lordship's sense. Your lordship has been sparing in your quotation, and the very great mistake is laid on very few words. "You lay it on me," says your lordship, "that I write down the magistrate's power in all cases." How does your lordship prove this to be a mistake? Why you affirm, "that one natural consequence from the whole tenor of your sermon itself is, that it is the true and proper business of the magistrate to concern himself with the outward practice of virtue, and of every thing which directly affects the happiness of society." And in p. 85. the mistake is charged again on my representing you as saying, "that the magistrate has no obligation to reward the outward practice of what is good for human society, or to punish the contrary."

As to the first passage, my lord, of writing down the magistrate's power in all cases; if your lordship had pleased to look but five lines farther you would have found those uneasy words ('in all cases') fully explained and limited by these, "in all possible cases of religion whatever." To what purpose then doth your lordship say that you maintain the magistrate's power in civil cases, when cases of religion only are under debate? To say that your lordship writes down the magistrate's power in all possible cases of religion, is so far from being my very great mistake of your lordship's sense, that you are going to assert this sense of your doctrine yourself in the fullest extent. Your lordship teaches in this postscript that the laws of Christ are of that nature, that the magistrate not only ought not, but in truth cannot encourage them by temporal sanctions: nay, though he should attempt to add temporal sanctions to the laws of the gospel, yet your lordship's meaning seems to be, "that it is no more adding sanctions to Christ's laws than to Mahomet's." Is not this, my lord, writing down the magistrate's power in all cases of religion? And why, my lord, must the same explication of your doctrine be a just and proper defence of it in your hands, and a very great mistake and reproach to you in mine? I beg, my lord, that we may endeavor to understand one another in this debate, and not make it necessary to trouble the world at every turn with an explication of the most obvious and plain things.

As to the other passage of my answer, whether the consequences charged in it on your lordship's doctrine were in your thoughts or in your heart, (as you intimate they were not,) I have no where presumed to say; and I will add for your lordship's satisfaction, that I verily believe, had they been in your thoughts, you would have guarded better against them. But is it, my lord, unfair in debates of this nature to show the consequences of a doctrine which the writer had not in his thoughts? Is there a better or any other way to show him, to his own conviction, the tendency of his principles, than to set before him the consequences which are apt to follow from them; whether he was aware of them or not when he taught the doctrine, and which had he been aware of, perhaps he would not have advanced such principles? Pray then, my lord, do not think

so hardly of me as to suppose that I mean to charge your lordship with directly maintaining all the consequences which I think flow from your principles. The argument itself supposes that I often think otherwise; for when, to show your lordship why you ought to dislike your principle, I show you such or such a consequence naturally proceeding from it, I suppose you not to like the consequence, otherwise it would be a poor reason why you should dislike the principle.

This cause of complaint being then removed, it remains only to be considered whether the consequences charged on your lordship's doctrine do really belong to it or no.

Your lordship's having affirmed that to add temporal sanctions to religion, considered as virtue and charity, under the belief of a supreme governor and judge, is to act contrary to the interests of true religion, as it is plainly opposite to the maxims on which Christ founded his kingdom; gave me occasion to say, "does not the practice of virtue and charity take in every thing that affects the happiness and well-being of mankind in this world? And is this no concern of the magistrate's? Because virtue and charity, and the contrary vices shall be rewarded and punished hereafter, must the world be torn in pieces in the meanwhile without remedy? And will it be sufficient for the magistrate to say, when he is called on to punish the offences against virtue and charity; this is religion; these are laws of Christ; he has annexed rewards and punishments to them hereafter, and I will have nothing to do with them?"

How now does your lordship show the great mistake of this? Why, by giving up, I think, all that you have been contending for; by showing the world that part of your sermon was spent in condemning a practice which now, it seems, no man can practise; which it is absolutely impossible any one should. Your lordship now teaches that since the laws of Christ require an outward practice, conducted by the inward sincerity of belief, and the motives of religion; and the magistrate cannot judge of the inward sincerity and motives; all he can do is to add sanctions to the outward practice, considered as affecting society, let it be founded on what motive it will: and you add, "it is no more adding sanctions to Christ's laws than to Mahomet's. The same outward practice, when it is on a princi-

ple of vain-glory or any worldly motive, is so far from being Christ's law, that it is disowned by him in the gospel; and yet it is the law of man, as it is the same material action useful to society. But it is religion and Christ's law solely, as it is practised on a principle of religion and a sense of duty; and the magistrate, in adding sanctions to it, does not add sanctions to a law of Christ, but to a law of men."

If this be the case, that it is impossible in the nature of the thing that temporal sanctions should be added to the laws of Christ, what occasion was there for your lordship to tell the world how contrary it is to the interests of true religion to add them? It is altogether as reasonable to exhort men not to fly as not to add rewards and punishments to the laws of Christ, if it be as impossible to add rewards and punishments to the laws of Christ as it is to fly. This is the position your lordship is now advancing; you distinguish between virtue and charity as required by Christ, and as it can be required by the magistrate. Though both should require them in the same words; and though the magistrate should declare it to be his intention to promote obedience to the same law, yet the same law would not be one, but two: it is Christ's law in the gospel; but if it gets into the statute-book, it is as much Mahomet's law as Christ's law. And thus your lordship, having proved that temporal sanctions cannot be added to the laws of Christ, has proved at the same time that the sermon which was preached to show that they ought not to be added, has no meaning at all. To what purpose does your lordship argue from the nature of Christ's kingdom, of his rewards and punishments, from his being sole king and sole judge, against the use of temporal rewards and punishments? Was all this to show how unlawful it is to do a thing which it seems nobody can do? Whoever compares the principles laid down in the postscript in order to the defence of your sermon, with the doctrines taught in the sermon itself, will be apt to conclude that the principles are of later date than the doctrines; for nobody can think that your lordship speaks in the sermon as one who taught that temporal sanctions could not be added to the laws of the gospel.

If this principle holds, the magistrate may put all the laws of Christ into his code, and yet be no encourager of religion;

for they cease to be laws of religion as soon as they come there. By the same reason the magistrate can no more discourage religion than he can encourage it; for if the nature of religion be such as not to be within reach of temporal sanctions, the consequence is, that it is no more in the magistrate's power to hurt it than it is to cherish it; he can no more oppress it than he can advance it: and if so, I hope your lordship will never more complain of civil sanctions as contrary to the interest of true religion, or as opposite to the maxims of Christ, but will give us leave to enjoy the security we think we have from the laws; and then perhaps the world may soon see that agreement in this matter which your lordship foretels.

I observe that your lordship throughout this argument calls an action a law—"because the same action is a law of Christ," p. 82. "This same good action is not a law of Christ, or edict of his kingdom," p. 84. and elsewhere. I always understood a law to be a rule of action, and not the action itself; but it is not for nothing that your lordship has chosen to speak in this manner. When you found it necessary to make the same law, as enacted by Christ, and as encouraged by the magistrate, two different laws, it was time to leave the old way of calling a law the rule of action; for that one law should make two different rules of action, that is, that it should be the same rule, and not the same rule, was too knotty a point to be explained. But your lordship found that the law being the same, yet there was a difference often in the obedience paid to it with regard to the magistrate, and the obedience required by God. On this difference your lordship distinguishes the law into two; and then indeed it was necessary to call the action the law, for it could be no longer a rule. You could not, my lord, be accurate in your language, if you would humor your principle. There is a reason and philosophy even in language, which some doctrines cannot bear; as your lordship will find when you endeavor to justify your expression, or to support your doctrine without it.

This principle being intended for the groundwork of your lordship's answer to one main article of the Representation, I beg that I may have leave to examine it without incurring the

imputation of so much arrogance as the setting up to be your lordship's director implies.

The doctrine is thus set down by your lordship: "I think it is plain—that the very same individual outward action, whether practised on the meanest principle of human life or on the best, is equally the object of the magistrate's care, as it equally affects society; but that this same good action or outward practice of virtue is not religion, not a law of Christ, nor an edict of his kingdom, any otherwise than as it is practised on a principle of religion, and on the inward sincere belief of a judgment to come. Of this the magistrate is not a judge. His sanctions therefore, considered as a magistrate, are no more than the sanctions of human and social laws."

To make this clear, your lordship gives the instance of charity, and supposes it to be encouraged by the civil magistrate; on which supposition you argue thus: "this, I say, is only annexing sanctions to an outward practice, good and beneficial to human society, let it be founded on what motive it will. It is no more adding sanctions to Christ's laws than to Mahomet's. This same outward practice, when it is on a principle of vain-glory, or any worldly motive, is so far from being Christ's law, that it is particularly disowned by him in the gospel; and yet it is the law of men, as it is the same material action useful to society. But it is religion and Christ's law solely, as it is practised on a principle of religion and a sense of duty. And the magistrate, in adding sanctions to it, does not add sanctions to a law of Christ, but to a law of men."

These passages contain your lordship's reasoning on this point: I shall speak but briefly to it now, expecting a fuller account of this principle in your intended answer. And,

First, it is not true that outward actions, as they affect society only, are the matter of human laws.

Secondly, this account given by your lordship, divests the civil magistrate and his laws of all moral rectitude.

When your lordship speaks of the very same individual outward action, as practised on the best or the meanest principle of life, I suppose you do not intend the same numerical action, (as the words import;) for the same numerical action cannot be

considered as proceeding from the best and the worst disposition; for it cannot proceed from both. I suppose therefore, your lordship means outward actions materially the same with the outward actions required by the laws of Christ; and these, you say, are the only proper matter of human laws, without any regard to the inward principle or disposition from which they arise.

Outward material actions considered merely in themselves, have nothing in them to denominate them either good or bad; and therefore so considered, they cannot be matter of any law. Your lordship is sensible of this; and therefore, having discarded with respect to the civil laws the principles of morality and the gospel, by which actions are distinguished, you introduce the good of society as the sole principle of distinguishing material actions in the eye of the civil law. Allowing this for the present, yet it will not serve your lordship's purpose to show that the magistrate is concerned with outward actions only, without regard to the inward principle. For I ask on what the inquiry is founded in criminal cases, whether the thing was done *animo proditorio* or no? If this be a proper inquiry, it must terminate in judging of the man's disposition, and the motives on which he acted; and if so, outward actions are not the sole matter of civil laws, though we should allow the good of society to be the only good they regard. *In maleficiis voluntatem spectari non exitum* is a maxim of the Roman law, and I believe, of every civil law in the world; and if this *voluntas* (intention) be the chief thing regarded by the law in such cases, how comes your lordship to teach that outward actions, without regard to the intention, are the only object of the magistrate's care? There is nothing better known in our own law than the difference between murder and manslaughter. The outward action is the same in both cases; the public good is equally affected in both cases by the loss of a subject; and it may happen to be more affected in the case of manslaughter than of murder by the loss of a more useful and valuable subject in this case than in the other. Whence then does the difference arise? Why even from that very thing which your lordship says the law can take no notice of, the intention and motives of the action. For this reason indictments charge the criminal

not only with the outward action, but with malice, with acting by the instigation of the devil, and not having the fear of God before his eyes. Strange language for a court to use, that has no right, nay, no possibility of inquiring after the malice, no pretence to examine whether the man had the fear of God or not before his eyes! Why should not every criminal plead in such circumstances that he is *coram non judice*, and vouch your lordship's authority to justify his plea? It is true that inward motives are not subject to the magistrate's power but as they are manifested by outward actions; but then it is so far from being true that outward actions, as they affect society, are the only matter of the law, the only object of the magistrate's care, that indeed the outward action is rarely considered but as an indication of the inward disposition; and on the disposition so manifested, the judgment is formed. In trials for treason the overt-act, that is, the outward action, is not the principal treason, but the proof of it: and pray, my lord, what is that treason which is distinct from the overt-act, and which yet is made manifest by it? Consider the case of the betrothed damsel in Deut. xxii. If she lies with a man in the city, both man and woman die; if in the field, the man only dies; the reason is, because in the city she must be supposed consenting, since help was near if she had called; in the field she might call and have no help: but the man in both cases must be wickedly disposed. Is it the outward action in this case that is the matter of the law, or the magistrate's sole care? For this law, though given by God, was executed by men, who were appointed judges of it; and therefore this was a civil law; and we see in it the wisdom of God directing the civil magistrate how to judge of the internal disposition by the external action.

But if your lordship will still affirm that the magistrate can in no case judge of the inward disposition from which outward actions proceed, you must maintain that outward actions, with their circumstances, can in no case make manifest the inward disposition; for if they can manifest it, then the magistrate has a plain way to judge of it; and if they cannot, then it is impossible in any case for any man to judge of the disposition of another: which if your lordship will maintain, I will not say, as I did in another instance, that you will fight without an

adversary; but I believe you will fight (always excepting your good friend the letter-writer) without a second. When our Saviour says, 'By their fruits you shall know them;' when his Apostle says, 'I will show you my faith by my works;' what do they mean? Are they talking of impossibilities all the while, and teaching us to learn from external actions what external actions can never show? In every case of murder the magistrate in his court gives judgment on the intention of the offender; and I hope your lordship will not say that as often as a man is accused of murder, so often the magistrate invades the prerogative of God, and sets up to be a discerner of hearts. This is a very plain case, my lord, and to be determined by sense and experience; and let the world judge whether there is such a thing as knowing the difference between an honest well-meaning man and a criminal: and I only desire that every man who thinks himself a judge in this case would allow the magistrate to have as much understanding as himself, and to be as capable of judging as he is.

'The truth of the matter, I conceive, lies here. Nothing can be the matter of a civil law which the civil magistrate cannot judge of. The civil magistrate cannot judge of internal motives and dispositions but by the means of external actions; and therefore the motions of the heart, before they break out into action, are exempted from his jurisdiction. And farther, outward actions and their circumstances being the only indications of the inward which the magistrate has to judge by, as long as the outward actions are such as they ought to be, supposing the intention right, he has no concern to inquire whether the intention be otherwise; and therefore if men act as if they were honest, he has no reason to look any farther. Now all this amounts to saying that the magistrate ought not to judge of the internal disposition, where there are no indications from which he can judge, or not sufficient; but it will never prove that the magistrate has nothing to do with internal dispositions; because where there are sufficient indications to judge by, the reason limiting his power ceases. The case of the magistrate is in many respects like that of a physician, who can see nothing but the outward symptoms of a distemper; but yet it is his business to judge by them what inward part is affected, and

how. He cannot see the inwards; but should any one say that the outward appearances are the sole objects of the physician's care, he would not get much credit by his account of the profession. Redness and paleness, as they are mere outward appearances, fall under the care of such gentlemen as deal in beauty-washes; but they are considered by physicians as effects leading to a discovery of the inward evil, which to remove is their proper care and business. In like manner the magistrate sees only the external action; but should he confine his judgment to that only, he would dwindle into a mere state-mountebank, and his laws would be mere beauty-washes, intended only to make people look well whether they are in health or no: and therefore all magistrates that I ever read or heard of, do consider external actions not merely as such, but as symptoms and indications of the internal disposition. And since all the world evidently makes this use of outward actions, why the magistrate only must be necessarily blind, and obliged to have less understanding than any of his subjects, (when in reason he ought to have more,) is a secret which those who have dealt in politics hitherto have not been able to discover.

The thing which seems to me to have carried your lordship into this notion, is your considering the magistrate as annexing positive rewards to good actions, which is rarely the case; and the very attempt to do it would be in most cases absurd and ridiculous. The civil magistrate encourages virtue, even as it is beneficial to society, by punishing offences against it; he encourages sobriety by punishing drunkenness; religion and piety, by punishing irreligion and profaneness; obedience to his laws, by punishing disobedience. If men do well, the magistrate looks on them as doing their duty in virtue of the obligations they are under, and not as having a right to be paid by him for their goodness or religion; and though men who by a course of well doing arrive to a reputation of virtue, are often called out and distinguished by the favor of the magistrate, yet such favor is bestowed freely, and is the effect of the governor's judgment and beneficence, and not the execution of a positive law which has ascertained no reward. And therefore your friend the letter-writer, in asking the question whether the magistrate may say, (by a law to that purpose,) "whosoever

loves the Lord as Christ has required shall have a thousand pounds," has shown that he is very capable of writing a book on a subject he does not understand. Whether it was this qualification that recommended him to your lordship for a proper second in this present dispute, is more than I can affirm; but if it was, your lordship has made a happy choice.

The reward which those that do well entitle themselves to from the civil magistrate, is peace, protection, and impunity; all which they forfeit as soon as they do ill: and therefore when your lordship speaks of the magistrate's rewarding particular good actions by a particular reward, you argue from a case that has little foundation in fact or reason. Did you ever hear of a man that was put on his trial in order to be rewarded for his sobriety or chastity? No, my lord; the courts of justice have nothing to do with a man till he has offended, or is supposed to have offended, against some law. And this is the reason why the magistrate does not inquire into the motives of good actions, because he is not obliged to make particular inquiry after good actions themselves: they carry their own reward with them; they secure to the doers of them the protection of the government, from which none are or ought to be excluded but those who do ill. St. Paul exhorts, 1 Tim. ii. 'that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for kings, and for all that are in authority:' not that we may get a hundred pounds a-piece for our godliness and honesty, but 'that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.' Peace and quiet are the proper and natural rewards which attend on the subject's obedience; for the natural right to a place at court is, I assure your lordship, a very new notion. Were the case to be what your lordship supposes, that men were to claim for their good actions particular rewards, the magistrate would as necessarily be to inquire into the motives of good actions as he now inquires into the motives of evil ones. For why should the magistrate distinguish in an offender's case by the intention which attended the action, and not distinguish in like manner on actions seemingly good? Does not the intention equally affect both cases? and is it not possible to know it sometimes in one as well as the other? Why then, my lord, should it be considered

in one, and not in the other? Were the magistrate to pay a thousand pounds for a good action, he would consider whether it was good or no; unless your lordship thinks that in such a case he ought to make no difference between virtue and the pretences to it, between sincere obedience and hypocrisy.

The authority of Scripture appealed to by your lordship must be considered. You cite Romans xiii. and tell us that the sanctions of the Roman magistrate there described by St. Paul, are not the sanctions of Christ's laws. And what then, my lord? The magistrate, you say, who knew nothing of Christ, who was an enemy to the edicts and laws of Christ's kingdom, did not add sanctions to Christ's laws. Will it follow from hence that the magistrate who does know him, who loves his laws and edicts, cannot add sanctions to them? If not, to what purpose is this instance brought? But, my lord, St. Paul requires obedience to some laws also relating to government, in the 13th to the Romans. They too were the Roman governor's laws; are they then become laws of Christ or not? If you say not, you must affirm that the laws enjoined by St. Paul are not laws of Christ; if you say they are, then the magistrate's laws may be the laws of Christ, and by parity of reason Christ's laws may be the magistrate's laws.

Is there any difference in this case between the laws of God and of Christ? The Roman governor's laws were not laws of Christ, considered under the formality of Christ's laws; but many of them were laws of God; unless your lordship will affirm that the moral law is not the law of God, or that the Roman magistrate encouraged no part of the moral law by his sanctions; for if he did, the difficulty returns on your lordship, and you must show that the moral laws encouraged by the civil magistrate are not the laws of God any more than the laws of Christ, when attended with temporal sanctions, are in your lordship's opinion the laws of Christ.

The instance your lordship makes use of to illustrate your doctrince is in my opinion a very unhappy one. Charity in the limited sense of it, as it signifies relieving the wants of others, is the instance; and you were directed to it, you say, because I had mentioned it. I do not remember I did, any otherwise than by repeating your words; however, I am sure

the account which follows of charity is intirely your own; I lay no claim to any part of it. Your lordship says, "the outward action of distributing money or necessaries, which may supply the wants of others, let it be on what principle it will, goes under the general name of charity." Indeed, my lord, this is great news; I never before heard that giving money on what motive soever was charity; I never thought that bribing poor electors in corporations was charity (though the money so given may supply their wants) in any sense, either moral, civil, or Christian. Besides, what can this instance signify to your purpose? You were to produce an instance of a law of Christ encouraged by the magistrate, and to show how it ceased to be the law of Christ. In order to this, you so define charity, that it is no longer a law of Christ, and then you suppose the magistrate to encourage it; and as if the business was done, you say, look ye now, is this a law of Christ? No, my lord; barely giving money is no law of Christ, whether encouraged by the magistrate or no; and therefore it is not the magistrate's encouraging of it that makes it cease to be a law of Christ: so that this instance is begging the question; you first suppose the magistrate to encourage a law which is not a law of Christ, and then you prove that the law so encouraged is not a law of Christ.

Soon after your lordship says, "this same outward practice, when it is on a principle of vain-glory or any worldly motive, is not a law of Christ; and yet it is the law of men, as it is the same material action useful to society." This, my lord, to my apprehension, amounts to saying that the same action (so your lordship speaks) is and is not the law of men. What was you to prove, my lord? Why, that the same law as enacted by Christ and as enacted by men makes two different laws. Your lordship then must speak of the same law; what is it then which you deny to be the law of Christ? Why, charity, you say, proceeding from vain-glory. Of this you say, (for your argument requires you to speak of the same law,) "it is a law of men;" that is, charity proceeding from vain-glory is a law of men; and yet you add, "as it is the same material action;" that is, not considered as proceeding from vain-glory, it is the law of men. And what now does all this amount to? If human

laws should encourage a sort of charity which the gospel has not encouraged, then it seems these two charities would not be the same. And what then?

But if your lordship means (as I suppose you did) that the same outward action, which the law of Christ requires as the effect of inward motives, may also be required by the magistrate, it is very true; but still the instance is not to the purpose, unless it be charity to buy a good bargain, to give so much money for so much honor, &c. which is just such charity as men go to market with every day. The reason, my lord, why the outward act in this case would not be charity, is not because the laws of Christ cannot be encouraged by the civil power, but because in the nature of the thing there is a difference between giving and selling. To give freely is charity; to give on view of honor, &c. is merchandise; and so it would be, my lord, were there no such law as the law of Christ in the world. How this instance then shows that the laws of Christ cannot be encouraged by the magistrate, is hard to be conceived; since the case would be the same had the gospel never been published.

But do you not see, my lord, that this instance is in itself improper? You propose the reward of charity in the general terms of honor or advantage: let the advantage then be specified; be it ten, or (as your friend has put it in another case) a thousand pounds; what would the consequence be? Why such a law would necessarily fall into stock-jobbers' hands; and as the government paid well or ill, so charity would be sometimes near par, sometimes much below it; and if your lordship would allow it to be charity to give all a man is worth, every man would soon be worth all which the law proposes as a reward; for if he was worth less than the reward of the law, why should he not part with all to be worth more, even as much as the reward of the law amounts to? In all events the government would have a hard bargain; nobody for the sake of the reward would give all the reward was worth; so that the public would lose in every instance.

Your lordship may do with this argument as you think fit. I have but one thing to beg of you, that I may not, for having mentioned stock-jobbers (as once before I unhappily mentioned

locks and bolts), be represented as a mere broker the next time your lordship or your second set pen to paper.

Secondly, this account given by your lordship divests the civil magistrate and his laws of all moral rectitude.

What your lordship teaches (the words have been already produced) amounts to this; that the magistrate, in the execution of his laws, concerns himself only with outward material actions, without any view or regard to inward motives and principles.

Now outward material actions, without regard to inward motives, have neither virtue nor vice in them; and therefore he who looks no farther than to the outward action only, has no respect to morality; and this, in your lordship's account, is the magistrate's case. The mere outward action is so perfectly void of virtue or vice, that the same action may be either, as it proceeds from different motives. He that cuts your throat with a design to murder you is a villain; he that does it with an intent to lance a tumor, and to save your life, does a work of friendship and charity: not but that in both cases the outward effect may be the same, and a life lost, for many a man dies under such an operation. What now must the magistrate do? Shall the villain and the friend both be hanged, or both rewarded? For he who judges only of outward material actions without regarding inward motives, must deal alike with both, and cannot consider the morality of the action in one case or the other. In this instance then there is no room for reason, equity, or justice, without taking in those considerations which your lordship has expressly excluded. I know your lordship calls the outward action a good action, and the outward practice of virtue; but for what reason you call it so your lordship only knows; for if any thing be certain, this is, that there is no outward practice of virtue independent of inward motives and principles. Man is a moral agent in consequence of the reason and understanding given him by God; and as such only he is subject to laws, and has therefore a right to be governed by laws of reason; unless it may be supposed that men, in consequence of their reason, are subject to laws which have no reason in them. We are told in holy writ that 'he who rules over men must be just;' because their being capable of justice is the only reason

that makes them subject to rule. But a law regarding outward actions only is no rule of justice or reason, and therefore cannot be a proper direction for a moral agent, nor a proper law for men. But as your lordship has stated the case, the civil law commands only outward actions, not regarding inward motives; the magistrate judges of such only: and since no man is bound by a law to more than the law and lawgiver require, the subject is likewise bound to outward actions only; which having in them nothing to denominate them moral, it is evident that neither law nor magistrate in commanding, nor subjects in obeying, have any views or ties to morality.

Your lordship rightly observes that the outward action may be attended with effects beneficial to society, though with respect to the agent there be nothing to denominate it good; (as in the case of charity on motives of vain-glory, as stated in the postscript.) This aptness in the action to serve the public good gives it a due perfection with respect to the magistrate, as your lordship teaches. For this action, you say, is the law of men; this the magistrate ought to encourage, and to look no farther. If this be so, it is evident that the civil law respects only a relative goodness in human actions with regard to the public, but has no concern for the real or moral goodness of any action. And this indeed comes up to the doctrine of the sermon, that no temporal rewards or punishments ought to attend on religion considered as virtue and charity; for virtue and charity are not the mere effect of an outward action; which effect being the only consideration before the magistrate in the dispensing rewards and punishments, it is plain they can never be applied to virtue and charity. But I put it to you, my lord, to consider whether the magistrate ought to reward an action which he knows to proceed from envy, malice, lust, or any other inordinate affection, because it happens to serve some good purpose of the public? If he ought not, then it is plain that whenever he does he is mistaken; but if he ought, it is as plain that he ought to reward and encourage vice, if he can make it useful to society. Choose which you will, the one is inconsistent with your doctrine, the other with the sense and reason of mankind. For if the magistrate does what he ought not, when he rewards an action evil in itself, how beneficial

soever it may be to society, the consequence is, that it is his proper business and should be his care to encourage real virtue, and then I hope the laws of Christ may come under his protection. But if you allow him to reward an action evil in itself, whenever it proves or can be made useful to the public, your lordship's divinity will outdo Machiavel's politics, and justify such practices as I am persuaded you hate and abhor.

Your lordship builds on a notion too common among some modern writers, that it is the magistrate's office to take care of the public good only. Whether this definition or description be perfect, it matters not to inquire: since I believe you will hardly find one of any reputation who has made that use of it which your lordship and your friend have made. They consider religion as that which chiefly affects the public good, and is consequently a necessary part of the magistrate's care; but now, it seems, material actions only affect the public good, and the magistrate has nothing to do with religion. This opinion is so new that Grotius tells us all the writers of any note on this subject were of a different mind: *Omnes denique qui de republica aliquid lectu dignum scripsere, hoc jus in sacra non partem tantum summi imperii, sed etiam potissimam atque præcipuam vocant.* And it is worth your lordship's observing with how much care the heathen moralists laid the foundation of civil society in the principles of religion, and a due regard to the honor of God; and what pains some Christian politicians have taken to make religion and a regard to the honor of God unnecessary to the being or well-being of civil government: as if no account were to be made of those many passages in Scripture which threaten an irreligious nation with destruction; with giving them up into the hands of their enemies, and making them become the scorn of the earth. If these are not vain words, then surely the magistrate is concerned, even as he tenders the good of the public, to guard the honor of God and religion against the insults of profane mockers, and ought to look on a man who labors to propagate impiety and a contempt of things sacred, as a worse enemy to the state than the poor rogue who robs on the highway. But if religion has no influence on the public happiness, farewell the Bible, for that has taught quite another doctrine. If your lordship would consult the sacred history rather than the ima-

ginary state of nature, of which our late systematical politicians are so full, you would see reason perhaps to alter your mind. I wish your lordship, when you next sit down to take care of the world, and to form principles of government for all nations and kindreds and people, instead of considering the state of a fairy world, would permit Noah, the second father of mankind, to attend at your council-board, and would ask him how he instructed his sons in the duty of government. You might reasonably suppose him to answer in this manner: "To my sons, I said, You see, my sons, how wonderfully we have been saved from the universal ruin: the great Creator will assuredly repeople the earth again, and you shall become heads of many nations. Remember then, and teach your children after you to know, what your eyes have beheld of the terrors of the Lord. You have been witnesses of a world once destroyed for impiety; let it therefore, as you value your own and your posterity's good, be your first care to guard and secure the honor that is due to God, and by punishing the first approaches to impiety, to prevent the spreading of the contagion, for fear the world should once more grow ripe for the divine vengeance. This your reason would teach you to do, though you had not had the example of a deluge to warn you. It is the glory of man that he is a reasonable creature; it is the glory of reason to know and to adore the Creator. Remember then, that when you govern men, the laws of reason are the golden rule, and by that rule the first regard is to be paid to the honor of God. This will prove a blessing and security to you and to the nations yet unborn."

What think you, my lord? Does the old patriarch talk sense? Had he reason to know that public good was concerned in the religion of the people? If he had, I trust you may see a just foundation for the magistrate's care of religion; but if the world's being once destroyed for impiety will not prove that the public good is concerned in the maintenance of piety and the honor of God, I must be content to sit down in despair of ever finding the truth.

But let public good, or any thing else that your lordship shall like better, be the object of the magistrate's care, yet whilst you maintain that material actions only are required,

you must exclude morality from the law. For say that the magistrate requires actions good for the public, yet still the effect that any action has is of no consideration as to the morality of the nation, but as it had a place in the intention of the agent. But your lordship cannot allow the magistrate to inquire whether the subject intended the public good or any thing else by his material action; for the reasons against examining the intention are equally strong in all cases; and therefore the magistrate has no judgment of the goodness or badness of his subjects, but only of the consequences of their actions to the public. And if this be indeed the case of all civil laws, as your lordship represents it to be, that they look to outward actions only without any concern for the morality of the action, the Roman emperor who made his horse consul was certainly in the right; for such a consul and such a law ought always to go together.

But what is this public good? Is the magistrate subject to the rules of reason and morality in making laws for public good, or is he not? If he is not, and your lordship will tell us so, the controversy will be brought to an issue, and the world may be left to be judge between us. If he is, then it is plain that the rules of reason and morality, (which are laws of God,) are superior to the considerations of public good, since public good is subject to be regulated by them; and consequently the laws for promoting public good must be laws of reason and morality, and take in more than mere external actions: unless your lordship can show us how a law requiring only external actions, without any regard to inward motives, is agreeable to reason and morality. And whenever your lordship is able to show this, I promise you to spend the remainder of my life as your friend tells me I have spent what is past, in minding something else than strict reasoning.

I come now, my lord, to the argument by which you prove the service done the magistrate in your sermon. In p. 82. 83. I read thus: "one natural consequence from the whole tenor of my sermon itself is, that it is the true and proper business of the magistrate to concern himself with the outward practice of virtue," &c. I was never so puzzled with a natural consequence in my life, and had been to this day at a loss, but that I found

myself something relieved at p. 85. where your lordship is on the same thought again, and thus expresses it: "I maintain the very contrary; viz. that Christ has annexed no rewards to that outward practice to which alone civil authority can reach; but to outward practice conducted by inward sincerity of belief, and the motives of religion." The natural consequence, if I take your meaning, lies here: "Christ has annexed no rewards to that outward practice to which alone civil authority can reach;" therefore civil authority ought to annex rewards to that outward practice. I wish still I do not mistake, for consequence I can see none. For suppose, my lord, that Christ did therefore annex no rewards to that practice because it is capable of none, will it follow naturally that the magistrate therefore ought to annex them? If Christ had a good reason not to do it, is it a natural consequence to infer that the magistrate must have a good reason to do it? Yet this is the case; that outward practice to which alone, you say, civil authority can reach, is incapable of reward because destitute of morality; the true consequence of which is, that as Christ did add no rewards, &c. so the magistrate ought to add none. It is equally true that Christ has added no rewards to internal principles; for if men act contrary to them, they will not be the better for having them. Will you allow me then to infer, by natural consequence, that since Christ has annexed no rewards to mere internal principles, therefore somebody else must add them? But there is another thing which hurts the consequence; for the outward practice which civil authority reaches is no practice of virtue, as has been already proved; and then the tenor of the sermon can never show, (nor indeed is there any pretence in it to show,) that the magistrate ought to concern himself with the outward practice of virtue, which your lordship affirms it does.

Having now said all that I think proper to trouble your lordship with at this time on this important subject of outward actions, I beg leave to lay before your lordship a passage out of a sermon which I published about eleven years ago; not being so vain as to suppose that it can or ought to be any direction to your lordship; but I do it, my lord, imploring your protection, and with no other design in the world than to

keep it out of the hands of your second; that I may not have a letter sent me once a month to show my agreement with your lordship.

The passage is this: (Sermon, Jan. 31. 1703-4. p. 7.)* "Of obedience there are two parts, the external and internal. The external consists in the outward conformity of our actions to the rules and principles of virtue; the internal in the sincerity and purity of the heart. The government of the world is not concerned in the internal part; for if men act as if they were honest, the peace and outward order of the world will be secured, though their hearts are perverse: and therefore the judgment of this, God, as he alone is able for it, has reserved to himself. The external part of obedience is that in the due performance of which the beauty and order of the world consists; and therefore this is the proper care of the governors of the world. The same holds in religion, which is the service of God: there are duties which none are concerned in but God and our own souls, such as faith, repentance, and the like, the virtue of which is internal, of the heart. But God requires likewise an external and visible worship from us, in which outward order and decency are required, but not determined; and therefore must be left to their jurisdiction to whom we are answerable for our outward behavior in all things." If this passage can be of any use to your lordship, it is intirely at your service; if not, I hope you will pardon the concern I have expressed for my own quiet, in making it part of my address to yourself. You, my lord, are happy in many seconds. I expect nobody to do my business for me, and therefore would not have it grow too fast on my hands.

In the next place, I am to thank your lordship for returning my syllogism again. I wish you had returned it fairly as you received it, that it might have been owned; but now you must needs take it home again, for it is as much Mahomet's syllogism as mine.

Thus it runs: "temporal punishments, you affirm, are not proper to inforce the laws and edicts of Christ's kingdom.

"But many of the laws and edicts of Christ's kingdom, as

* See Vol. iii. p. 261.

to the matter of them, (for so only we can mean) are laws of reason, and of great importance to society.

"Therefore, according to you, for the temporal magistrate to inforce by temporal punishments," &c.

The first proposition, as it is mine, is as fit to support any thing else as the conclusion drawn from it. Did I not expressly say in the sermon itself (and not afterwards, when I found there was occasion for it), "that it ought to be remembered that the arguments from the nature of religion and of Christ's spiritual kingdom against the use of temporal punishments, are conclusive only as to the ministers of that kingdom, and cannot extend to the civil magistrate?"

I find, my lord, you are resolved not to remember this; and therefore you charge me in the consequence with extending the arguments to the civil magistrate, which I had expressly said ought not to be so extended.

Is this, my lord, a good manner of writing, and fair usage of an adversary? I am sorry the cause wants such supports; more sorry that your lordship should condescend to use such.

Your lordship has been so kind in this short postscript to give me an instance how you would defend my doctrine, if I would be content to let it pass for the same with your own: in confidence of the like favor I will propose an objection to you, of which in that case I should be very apprehensive.

Suppose then that I had, on the publishing your lordship's sermon, professed myself to be in your sentiments, and had maintained that the argument from the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, or Christ's ministers, (which you please,) did intirely exclude the magistrate from adding the sanctions of this world to the laws of Christ: suppose somebody had sent me a letter to show my inconsistency with myself, and had proved it thus: "you say now, Mr. Dean, that the argument drawn from the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom excludes the magistrate from adding sanctions to the laws of Christ; but how comes this doctrine to please you now which displeased you in 1712? You had then an occasion to consider this argument, and your thoughts are in print; and though you allow the argument to be good against the church's pretension to temporal power, yet you expressly in the plainest words

reject the argument with respect to the civil magistrate. See your own words: 'it ought always to be remembered,' &c. Had any body else after this express declaration charged the doctrine as excluding the magistrate's power in all cases of religion, you would have had reason to have resented the injury; what then must we think, now we see you are doing this thing yourself? The argument was the same in 1712 as in 1717: the views perhaps are altered." Tell me, my lord, how I might answer this charge; tell me, I say, or else quit your own. Or if you think both may stand together, even part with your man of weight and abilities, and speak the same plain English with your friend, and tell me once for all my sermon is nonsense.

But this is not all. In the second proposition your lordship has rejected your own words which I made use of, "the laws of Christ are almost all," and changed them into these, "many of the laws," &c. Your lordship does not use to be displeased at any thing of your own; how then come you to reject your own words now? Was the former expression less to your purpose than the latter? No; but your lordship had found in the letter a very poor cavil at my syllogism founded on your lordship's words which I had used; and your lordship changed the terms to countenance your friend's learned observation, who found out that the minor proposition of my syllogism was particular, and the conclusion general. And now, my lord, (since we must come to boys' play,) let us consider whether the minor be particular or no. Pray what did your lordship mean by saying, "they (the laws of Christ) are almost all appeals to the will of God, to his nature known by the common reason of mankind?" I understood you to mean that the moral law was the main of the gospel, and that your lordship by those words, *almost all*, did not intend to deny of any moral law that it is a law of Christ, but only to avoid affirming that every law of Christ is a moral law. Your proposition then is certainly equivalent to this, "the laws of Christ comprehend all moral laws." If you disallow this, be pleased to tell us what moral law is not a law of the gospel? If you do allow it, pray put it into the place of your own words as they stand in my proposition, and then consult with your friend whether it be general or particular;

and if you find it to be general, the consequence will be good, without asking leave of your lordship or your second. Remember on another occasion how angry your lordship was that your own sense was not represented in your own words; and yet how readily did your lordship support a cavil, for which there had been no ground if I had not used your own words? for I assure your lordship I chose them not as being most proper, but only as being yours; and I hope your lordship will instruct your seconds better than to fall foul on your own propositions whenever they meet them in an adversary's book.

But the weightiest matter is yet behind. In drawing up your syllogism, you have affirmed that "the laws of Christ are, as to the matter of them only, laws of reason." And this you affirm in my name as well as in your own; for you add, "so only *we* can mean." I do assure your lordship I never did mean so in my life, nor ever will. I see what your lordship intends: you had been told that if the magistrate could not add sanctions to the laws of Christ, he could not add them to the laws of reason and morality. It seems you do not like this consequence; and therefore to enable him to add sanctions to the moral law, you now affirm that moral laws are not the same with Christ's laws, but only as to the matter; that is, they are the same with Christ's laws, just as you teach civil laws may be the same, that is, in such a manner that they are as much Mahomet's laws as Christ's laws.

But pray consider, are not the laws of nature and reason laws of God? and does not God require inward obedience as well as Christ? Does not reason teach us to act on principles of religion in expectation of a future judgment? How then are the laws of reason the same with the laws of Christ as to matter only, when both require the same internal and external obedience? This account not only destroys natural religion by making it a law of external actions only, (which have no morality in them,) but it undermines revealed religion also, which is built on the principles of natural religion, and cannot stand without them. 'On these two commandments,' (both of them moral laws,) says our Lord, 'hang all the law and the prophets.' The moral precepts are antecedent to revelation; and such laws they are from which the precepts of the law, and

the prophets, and the gospel, are deduced. But can the pure laws of the gospel, which require inward obedience, be deduced from a law requiring only an outward material obedience, not regarding inward motives, and which in your lordship's opinion are as nearly allied to the laws of Mahomet as of Christ?

As severely as I have been rebuked for one syllogism, I will venture on another, and leave it to your lordship's consideration.

The laws of reason and the moral laws of God are the same.

But your lordship affirms the laws of Christ are the same as to the matter only with the laws of reason.

Therefore the laws of Christ are the same as to the matter only with the laws of God.

Will you hold the conclusion, my lord, or will you part with the premises? And since something you must part with, if you will not be offended at me, I wish you once more the happier choice, and so proceed to what remains in your postscript.

At p. 87. your lordship says, "I think I see plainly that a person may maintain the maxims or motives of this world to be contrary to those motives on which Christ's religion was founded by himself, who best knew what was contrary to its interests; without maintaining either that worldly motives always destroy all true religion, or that it is impious and wicked (as your words are, p. 26.) in any to apply them in those points I truly intended in my sermon:—and I think this as plain as it is that I may maintain immense riches to be in their tendency contrary to virtue, without supposing either that they always actually destroy it, or that it is impious and wicked for a man to leave a great estate to his son." If I would answer this according to the example set by your friend, and approved by your lordship, I should tell you that the secret is now out, and that all this bustle is with a view to leave a great estate to your son. But, my lord, I know better how to take than to return such usage, and shall only say, that I could least of all have expected from a friend of your lordship's. The point your lordship now will maintain, if I take you right, is,

that the motives of this world, particularly the sanctions of human laws, are contrary to the motives of the world to come; and that to apply them in the case and on account of true religion, is to act contrary to its interests, to do what tends to its destruction.

If so, my lord, I desire to know, first, whether that supremacy which is inseparable from the imperial crown of this realm does not carry in it a power of applying, and a trust obliging to the application of the sanctions of human laws in the case and on account of true religion? Secondly, whether any one ought to be invested with a power of doing, or may receive a trust obliging him to do, what is contrary to the interests of true religion, and tends to the destruction of it?

This is indeed a main point; in the resolution of which the civil power as well as religion is greatly concerned. And if you will uniformly maintain what you have, first in your sermon, and now in this your postscript, affirmed, you will so justify one charge in the Representation as will also abundantly justify that person, who, as your lordship has heard, was thereby determined to enter into and be zealous for the condemnation of what you had preached; and you will save him at least the trouble of contending with you.

As to the other point relating to Christ's authority, your lordship esteems my concessions a reward worthy of all your labor; but if the concessions be not the effect of your labor, I do not see how it can be the reward of it. But your lordship is so fond of the noble subject of absolute authority, that the world must be told that it is owing to your labors that there is a man who disclaims it. Well then, I am, I must be your convert: will you now be content with my concessions, and let the subject rest since we agree in it? Not for the world! What, quit absolute authority! Conscience and judgment require the contrary; nay, the honor of the Committee too; "the majority of which," you say, "are not so blind as not to see that they and I are as distant from one another in our sentiments, and the grounds on which they are built, as they and you can possibly be supposed to be:" that is, though I have disclaimed absolute authority, yet still you are resolved the majority of the Committee shall hold it; and for no other

reason that I can see, but because your lordship finds it necessary to write against it. But pray, my lord, how do you discover this great disagreement in sentiments between me and the majority of the Committee? Is it that we agreed in the same Representation? or what else is it that has intitled your lordship to judge of our sentiments and inward motives, and to exercise that power as a private man, of which all the powers in the world (as you teach us) are utterly incapable?

If I have indeed given such an account of the Representation as your lordship says I have, you had reason to think that the majority of the Committee and I were of different sentiments. Your lordship "wonders to find yourself ridiculed," (as you are pleased to call it) "for supposing that the Committee meant to support their charge by what they quoted out of your sermon; and for not imagining that they made several citations from thence, professedly to support it without any such view or design." How, my lord! professedly to support it without any such view of supporting! I hope your lordship does not always mean by no views such as are consistent with doing the very thing denied professedly: "because," your lordship adds, "I think this a much harder reflexion on their Representation than on me; and I ought to have begged pardon of them if I had once admitted such a thought, until I had it in public under the hand of one of themselves." Well then, you have it under my hand, and in public too, that "the Committee meant *not* to support their charge by what they quoted out of your sermon;" and, "that they made several citations from thence professedly to support it without any such view or design."

And now, my lord, I must beg to know where this public declaration under my hand may be found; for I do assure you I am an utter stranger to it. I find, indeed, in my Answer, these words: "The Representation has produced out of his lordship's sermon some passages, where (in which) the doctrines which are conceived to subvert the government of the church, and those (doctrines) relating to absolute authority, are mixed together: the Committee fix their charge on the former (doctrines); his lordship will answer to the latter; and no doubt the world about us will improve by the controversy."

But this cannot be what your lordship means, for here is

nothing to ridicule your lordship; nothing to justify your intimating that the Committee quoted passages out of your sermon, without meaning to support their charge by them. What I have said amounts to this, that the passages produced in the Representation do (some at least) contain the doctrines against absolute authority, and those against all authority, mixed together; that they were so blended that one could not fairly be produced without the other; and therefore I say, "the Committee added, to prevent mistakes, short observations of their own, which were intended to point to the thing they found fault with." How does this reflect on the honor of the Committee, or justify your lordship in supposing a declared design in the Committee different from their secret and real design? Your lordship has expressed such a sense of this injury done to the Committee, that I cannot but hope that when you find it to have risen from yourself only, you will do what you have professed you ought to do in such a case, beg their pardon.

Your lordship has had no better fortune in your secret history than in your discovery of this secret design of the Committee. Your lordship represents me as the most inflexible in making this a matter personal on you by name. I do assure your lordship there was so little room for any one to be inflexible in this point, that I do not remember there was any difference in opinion about it: there was some debate whether the sermon should be mentioned; but whether your lordship by name should be mentioned was never disputed. The bishops and clergy, those of the Upper and Lower House were, to the best of my knowlege, unanimous in their judgment that your lordship by name, and your doctrines in your own words, should be in the Representation.

The next piece of secret history (for so I must call it) is to be met with in pages 91. 92. Your lordship has found history, and it seems I must find application; for "I leave the application of this," you say, "to yourself." Your lordship mentions this history as founded on a declaration, and tells me that I must remember it. Indeed I do not, nor have I met with the declaration referred to; but be it true or false, in obedience to your lordship I will apply it. And thus I reason on the case: if what was then designed was right, neither your lordship nor

I must complain; if it was wrong, it will not follow that, because something was wrong relating to Convocation twenty years ago, therefore nothing done in Convocation can be right now; so that under either view your lordship's history is nothing to the purpose: unless your lordship too has sometimes a secret purpose which you do not care to own. But after all your complaints, you own that I acted according to the trust reposed in me: this declaration, my lord, is worth all my labor; and now your lordship and I have rewarded each other to mutual satisfaction. But then you declare "you will never suffer on any account in the world any such trust to be reposed in you." How, my lord! Have you not the same trust reposed in you? What is the trust of a clergyman that is not the trust of a bishop? what of a member of the Lower House which is not also of a member of the Upper? Your lordship, I suppose, can explain this; and when you do, I shall be ready to examine it.

In the meantime I must not forget the good words your lordship has bestowed on me. You promise "neither to make merry with the manner nor the matter of my arguments; but whatever you think of both, to treat them as coming from a person of great abilities and weight." Can you do this, my lord, whatever you think of the arguments? I see your lordship's respect for me is just what you have described civil obedience to be, an outward material action independent of inward motives and principles. By this rule, I suppose, I am to understand what your lordship says, in p. 91. that you are pleased to think that so able and so learned a man is engaged with you in this controversy. It is fair, however, my lord, to give the world notice that they are not to conclude what you think of an adversary by the good words or good usage he has from you. For my own part I am so apt to speak as I think, that I cannot engage to return your lordship such civilities; and in truth, when I first read these good words in the postscript, I was in pain for myself; for a compliment from your lordship is like a warning of a clock, you are sure to strike soon after. And accordingly, at p. 90. this man of weight and abilities is set forth; there he is at full length, a contriver of "labyrinths to lead the reader in backwards and forwards, till he has lost

sight of every thing that can lead him out again:" in a word, one who has defended his sermon in such a manner, as will serve "to defend any sermon in the world." This, my lord, is plain speaking; and I will give you back the compliments into the bargain, if you will but make good this part of the character. I am not so uneasy under it as to call with any great eagerness on your lordship to undertake it. Do as you please; but this I promise, that whenever your lordship will venture losing yourself in this labyrinth, I will certainly be at leisure to show you the way out again. And if you think that the letter to which the postscript is joined has done the work to your hands; if your lordship will make it your own by declaring that you will justify and stand to the doctrines and consequences of it; if you will put but a little of your reputation on this issue; though I had as lieve teach children to read as answer his letter, yet for your lordship's sake I may be tempted to submit even to this employment.

It is a happy talent to be able to give a reader the very worst idea of an adversary, and such impressions as the roughest language could not convey; and at the same time to possess him with an opinion of the writer's meekness, charity, and benevolence! to open his mind by great professions of candor; and when it is prepared, to slide in such a character as would not be received from an angry pen! The smiles, the compliments, the good wishes of such an adversary, are very precious balms; but such they are as always break the head.

I shall leave this to your lordship's consideration; adding only the Roman historian's reflexion on the conduct of Domitian: *Et quo contentius abuteretur patientiâ hominum, nunquam tristiorem sententiam sine præfatione clementiæ pronuntiavit: ut non aliud jam certius atrocis exitus signum esset, quam principii lenitas.**

As to my own manner, which your lordship complains of, though I shall always think myself at liberty to examine an argument as it deserves to be examined, yet will I never willingly offend against the rules of decency with respect either to your episcopal or personal character: of the first your lordship

* Sueton. in Vita Dom.

knows no ill can be said; of the other I often have said good.

But the thing that now surprises me is, that your lordship should think it proper on any account to add a postscript to such a letter. I have no complaint against your friend; he has a natural right to be like himself, and to write like himself; and therefore when he tells me roundly that my sermon, without his comment, is nonsense, I am under no concern to answer him, but am willing to leave it to the world to judge whether this be want of sense in him or in me.

But these things stand in another light, as they come into the world approved and recommended by your lordship. Look, my lord, and see with what candor he represents me as having no concern but for the goods and revenues of the church. I had compared negative discouragements to locks and bolts to show that both are intended merely for security; but neither the one are supposed to make people honest, nor the other to make them profess a religion they cannot approve. What says your friend to this? Why he finds my secret out; that I mean nothing by the church but the goods and revenues of the church. Try this reasoning, my lord, on the parable of the talents, Mat. xxv. Our Saviour compares the kingdom of heaven to a man taking a journey, who left to his servants, some one talent, some more: at his return he accounts with them, and those who had made most of their talents, are most rewarded. Would you advise your friend to say, oh! here is the secret of the gospel come out: it is all turning the penny; and he is the best Christian who makes most interest of his money? Or should he say so without your advice, would your lordship add a postscript to the comment, and lend the authority of your great name to spread it far and wide in the world? But why should I ask your lordship whether you would do what I have already seen you do? Nay, more, my lord; you set the example yourself. Dr. Snape had said, "that the desirable work (of the Reformation) was not completed till the earthly rulers, being themselves converted, established and confirmed it by temporal sanctions." Your lordship replies on him: "a sentence, Sir, which if it be duly considered, must be very shocking to every Christian mind; unless the desirable thing in

Christ's kingdom be riches and power. All who have not forgotten the very name of Jesus Christ, and all his words relating to this subject, must know what to think of it." What tragedies are here! And yet I believe no Christian except yourself saw any such meaning in the doctor's words: nay, it is impossible this should be his meaning, for the case was in fact otherwise. The Reformation carried off both power and riches from the church; and wherever it prevailed, this was one constant effect of it; for which reason the worldly-minded churchmen were and are still against it. Pray, my lord, what accession of riches and power was made to your lordship's bishopric at the Reformation, or to any other? How could you then, my lord, understand the words in this sense? Did you never read the preamble to Queen Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity in the Common Prayer Book? I will transcribe it for your use, to show you what was the desirable work completed by the earthly rulers. "Whereas, at the death of our late Sovereign Lord King Edward the Sixth, there remained one uniform order of common service and prayer, and of the administration of sacraments, rites and ceremonies, in the church of England, which was set forth in one book, intituled, 'the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of Sacraments,' and other rites and ceremonies in the church of England, authorised by act of Parliament holden in the fifth and sixth years of our said late Sovereign Lord King Edward the Sixth; intituled 'an Act for the Uniformity of Common Prayer and Administration of Sacraments;' the which was repealed and taken away by act of Parliament in the first year of the reign of our late Sovereign Lady Queen Mary, to the great decay of the due honor of God, and discomfort to the professors of the truth of Christ's religion." Do you yet perceive, my lord, what was the desirable work that was begun under Edward VI., that decayed under Queen Mary, and was completed under Queen Elizabeth? The professors of the truth were comforted or discomforted, as the honor of God revived or decayed by the encouragement of earthly powers. But now the very mention of this desirable work is handle enough to represent all whom your lordship likes not, as mere worldlings. But why must all suffer thus? Why must I? Had I ever encouraged any body

to abuse the whole clergy of the nation in order to exalt my own character, and to make way for my friend to call on all men of station and fortune to do honor and service to so generous a patriot of the public, and so faithful a steward of the gospel; had I, on pretence of exhorting others to submission, under the hard terms of not tasting the beneficence of the government in a distinguishing manner, shown how uneasily I bore the want of preferment myself; your lordship would have had some color to think me not a little concerned for the riches and glories of this world. But I believe your lordship is not unwilling that I should say no more on this subject.

But give me leave, my lord, to observe to you how you aggravate this charge on the doctor. After having loaded him with your own very unjust comment on his words, you add, "I will say no more now of it, but that it is worthy of him who contends professedly for making religion a civil test, for debasing the most sacred thing in the world into a political tool and an engine of state." Who this sentence is worthy of I cannot tell; but sure I am, it is very unworthy of your lordship. This, my lord, is a censure not only on the doctor, but on the common sense and reason of mankind, on all times and all nations of the world: for pray consider, is not religion the test in every case where an oath is required? And name, my lord, the time or people who have not used it. The Old Testament and the New afford us examples and precepts to justify the practice; so do all the histories extant, of all times and people. And do you think, my lord, that the great secret was reserved for your discovery; and that the world after so many ages were to be untaught by your lordship what they had ever practised on the principles both of natural and revealed religion? There is not a cause, be it never so trivial, tried in Westminster Hall, but religion is made a civil test; and is it right, my lord, to require this test of a man's honesty before he is admitted an evidence in a five shilling cause; and is it impious to require it, when he is admitted to a place of trust in the government, and has, in part, the lives or fortunes of the nation committed to his fidelity? Is it reasonable to require this test of a witness before the property in a horse shall be put on his evidence; and is it absurd and infamous to require some security when the

preservation of the established church is the point in question? Religion, my lord, is therefore the properest, the only proper test of a man's honesty, because it is the most sacred thing in the world; and yet this, with your lordship, is a reason why it never should be a test. Take away this, that religion is a sacred thing, and then going to a play would be as good a test as going to church; and a bow to a judge might qualify a witness as well as his appeal to God by oath. But I see, my lord, the cause is to be maintained at any rate; and that the controversy is to be managed by appealing to the passions or even the follies of mankind.

Before I take my leave, I desire to ask your lordship whether you will be answerable for your friend's defence of your doctrine? He has entered himself your second, and you have owned him by your postscript; will you stand to this plea in your behalf, and justify his assertions? If you should, there will be worse work on your hands than ever I imagined. See how he defends that passage in your sermon: "if any man on earth have a right to add to the sanctions of his laws, &c. they are so far kings in his stead," &c.

The charge on this passage is, that you condemn all magistrates who add sanctions to Christ's laws. To prove that you do condemn them, it has been insisted on that your words amount to saying, that all who add sanctions do usurp the dominion of Christ and dethrone him: so that the main and only point is, whether you condemn the magistrate or no for adding sanctions. The proof lies on this, whether you charge him with usurping the dominion of Christ or no when he does add them. And what says your friend to this? Why he was so full of this dethroning that he lost sight of the main point, and therefore to clear your lordship from nobody knows what, he affirms that your words do not amount to a charge of dethroning Christ: for as he learnedly expresses himself, "if they dethrone Christ, then Christ is totally exempted from all power: but his lordship's proposition directly asserts some power to Christ still." And this he proves from those material words, *so far*. He allows then, my lord, that you do affirm that Christ is *so far* (though not totally) divested of power, which is just as if a lawyer on a trial for treason should plead that his client invaded

one kingdom, that of Ireland for instance, but did not totally divest the king of all power, for he left him Great Britain still. If you allow this defence, then we say, to divest Christ of any of his power is impious. But your lordship allows that the magistrate in adding sanctions to his laws does so far (though not totally) divest him. And thus your second has justified that hard word impious, which so much displeased you.

Again, your friend labors much about laws of reason and Christ, (on which subject he is always unhappy,) to show that there are some which the magistrate's power cannot reach, because he cannot judge in invisible cases: but then he puts the question to himself: "but in cases where it is visible that men break the laws of Christ, can the magistrate interpose?" If it affects not the state, he is of opinion he cannot. But now for the reason: why truly the magistrate must not judge in visible cases, because he cannot judge in invisible ones; or in his own words, "for what sanctions can any man have a right to add to make a Christian love his neighbor, who can never know whether a man complies or not?" How happy are you, my lord, in a second!

The authority of the magistrate to inforce obedience to the plain laws of religion was the main point your friend had to speak to. I had distinguished between the points in which men differ, and those in which their reason will not permit them to differ; and asserted the magistrate's right to add the sanctions of this world, to make men do what the light of their own minds teaches them they ought to do; and that with respect to religion, as well as civil obedience; since the magistrate being the vicegerent of God, it is his duty to maintain the honor of God and religion. This was so plainly stated, that your friend could not avoid seeing it, though he had nothing to say to it. See, my lord, how he deserts the cause: "when you will explain what you mean by vicegerent in this case, I will consider your assertion."

Thus, my lord, he twice walked up to the point; and for no reason that I can see, but to show his bashfulness, and twice to run away from it. I wonder he thought it necessary to write before he had any thing to say to the purpose. But now you see his difficulty, my lord, I doubt not but your great

skill in the thirteenth of the Romans will enable you (for I do not intend) to instruct him what is meant by the magistrate's being διάκονος Θεοῦ, (the minister of God,) and having, as such, a power to reward those who do well, and to execute wrath on evil-doers.

And now, my lord, if you like such a second, yet I must own to you I do not like such a correspondent; nor can I imagine what tempted your lordship to put him to this employment; unless you chose a second in the humility of your heart, as the Roman consul did the companion of his triumphs;

——— Sibi consul
Ne placeat, curru servus portatur eodem.

I have nothing more to trouble your lordship with at present, but to assure you that I am, in all offices of Christian friendship,

Your Lordship's

Obedient Servant,

THOMAS SHERLOCK.

SUMMARY.

REASONS given by the dean for entering into this question. The bishop's argument in it said to depend on the principle, that religion ought not to be made a civil test. In answer to which the dean replied, is not religion the test in every case where an oath is required? The bishop now affirms that what he said referred only to the sacramental test. At this point the controversy arrived in the bishop's last performance. Before that which he has advanced is considered, it is necessary to rise a little higher, and to state the fact of the case about which the dispute is. Writers on the test err in calling the sacrament sometimes the test, and sometimes the qualification for an office. It is necessary therefore to show the true design of the legislature in requiring the sacramental test. Quotations given from Act of 13 Car. II. Stat. 2. c. 1., and 25 Car. II. c. 2. These acts being made for the security of the church as by law established, the intention plainly was, to keep nonconformists of all sorts (whose principles must necessarily lead them to injure the established church) out of offices civil and military, and out of the government of corporations. Hence it became necessary to consider what should be considered sufficient proof that a person was well affected to the ecclesiastical constitution. Visible communion is the best proof of this; and the only thing remaining was to discover what particular act of church communion would be the best evidence of a man's affection to the church. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper shown to be the most convincing in this respect: this therefore was enacted. Two things here to be observed; first, that the barely

receiving the sacrament is not the test required by the act, but receiving it according to the usage and rights of the church of England: secondly, that the receiving of the sacrament thus is not the qualification for an office, but only the proof of such qualification: this explained; shown also by a reference to the act of 3 Jac. I. c. 4. against popish recusants, and the act 7 Jac. I. c. 2. respecting the naturalising of strangers and the restoring to blood persons attainted. Hence the bishop is shown to argue against something which no law supposes or requires. Mr. Sykes also is shown to be in error when he speaks of the abuse of the sacrament introduced by these laws. His arraignment of the legislature on this point strongly stated. Case put to his conscience, and that of the bishop. It is observed that the argument urged in this case by his lordship and others, is just as strong against the use of oaths. The two questions which naturally arise from the true state of the case, stated. Some previous observations made on the second of these, where the bishop is said to mistake intirely, when he speaks as if the receiving of the sacrament were itself the qualification for an office, &c. and therefore seems to charge the legislature with perverting that holy institution. The first question arising from the true state of the case again stated; namely, whether it be lawful to confine offices of power and trust to such as are obedient and well affected to the ecclesiastical state and constitution of the realm. This question resolved into two points: 1. whether it be lawful in any case to make laws by which some persons shall be rendered incapable of offices: 2. whether it be reasonable in the instance before us. With regard to these two points, it is shown that it is lawful and expedient to make such laws; that to talk of the common rights of subjects in the present case is to beg the question; that a submission of private rights to the public good is the fundamental article of government; and that it is lawful to restrain even the natural right that every man has to

food and raiment: is it unlawful then to limit the capacity which subjects have to places of power and trust? There is indeed so much compassion left for cases of natural necessity, that in the last extremity we still say, necessity has no law: but it must be a sad world where avarice and the lust of power obtain the same privilege. His lordship may say that he does not plead against restraints of this sort in general, but that he confined himself to the sacramental test, and to cases where religion is concerned: this answered. Consideration of the manner in which this right, which the state has over the capacity of all its subjects, is to be exercised. This right then being supposed, it is next considered whether there was sufficient reason for what was done in the present instance. Statement of what was done when this nation threw off the errors and absurdities of popery: the necessity of preserving an authority in church matters enlarged on. Disturbances which the peace of the protestant church has met with since its establishment. Those in the days of Edward VI. adverted to; those of Queen Mary's reign; those of Queen Elizabeth's; those of James's. State of the nation in the times of Charles I. and of the Commonwealth. State at the restoration; from whence the necessity of the test acts is shown. But though their enactment were just and proper at the close of the troubles, still it may be said that now the case is altered, and that the dissenters may be safely trusted: this argument answered at length. The bishop is recommended, in his great zeal against all limitation of offices to members of the church establishment, to reflect that the crown itself is subject to it: this point enlarged on. One great object of the revolution was to secure and preserve the established church; to labor therefore to hurt this church is no mark of friendship to the revolution. The bishop's writings censured on this account. The legislature knows no religious rights but what are contained in the establishment of the church of England. Reasons summed

up to show that it is justifiable to confine offices of power and trust to persons well affected to the ecclesiastical establishment. Another consideration urged, which makes the test with respect to corporations highly reasonable; the influence which they have in one part of the legislature: this consideration made more general, and extended to other offices in the state. Hitherto the corporation and test acts have been considered generally: brief consideration of the 25th of Charles II. in particular, in respect to an objection made against it. This act, when first made, related particularly to baptists; in which point of view the bishop himself can see its reasonableness. The nation's obligation to this act stated. Complaint made that it was extended to protestant dissenters. This effect shown to have been foreseen: understood at the time when the toleration act was passed: allowed to remain by King William and his parliament. King William's opinion on this point shown to have been declared before the revolution. It is shown that dissenters in Holland do not enjoy greater privileges than in England. The bishop's conduct in calling openly for a repeal of the test act censured, on the ground of an act for securing the church of England as by law established in the fifth of Queen Anne, cap. 8. sect. 7. The words of the clause in this act relating to the security of the church, transcribed. The second question: supposing it right to put offices of power and trust into the hands of such only as are well affected to the ecclesiastical establishment, whether it be lawful to require of any man, who is willing to accept such office, that he should communicate with the church, and particularly that he should receive the sacrament according to its usage, in order to prove his communion with it? This point fully argued. His lordship's general objection that religion ought not to be a civil test, was answered by the dean's observation, that religion is the test, whenever an oath is administered. His lordship in reply appeared to deny this, and with that view compounded the terms of the question: these

set right. From thence it is deduced, 1. that to love, to fear, and to trust God, as governor of the universe, are the first and most essential duties of religion, &c. 2. that these essential duties are the religion on which an oath is founded. The meaning of the word test is next considered. It is shown in what sense religion is made a civil test; viz., that the magistrate is enabled from thence to draw a consequence which he applies to civil affairs. This applied to the two cases under consideration. But if it shall be allowed that the objection, drawn from the nature of religion in general, against its being made a test in civil matters, be not good; yet it remains to consider whether there be any thing in the institution of the sacrament that makes it unlawful to be so used. It is shown that there is nothing unlawful in this, provided that the statutes requiring the sacramental tests have neither added to nor taken away any thing from Christ's institution. Case of those who receive the sacrament unworthily, considered: that also of clergymen who are compelled to administer it to such: advice to the clergy on this point. Another result of the bishop' reasoning against the test act is, that it is a worldly motive to bring all Christians to the same profession and to the same form of words and ceremonies in public worship: this answered. Conclusion.

PART II.—Consideration of what the bishop has offered to show respecting the little religion there is in an oath, compared with the religion of the sacrament. Five preliminary observations intended to remove the two cases out of sight, commented on. His lordship's five heads of difference next displayed. The dean concludes with expressing his surprise that a Christian bishop should take so much pains to undervalue the religion and sanctity of an oath, which the very heathens held in the greatest veneration: this point enlarged on.

POSTSCRIPT, relating to a mistake made by the dean in supposing that King William did nothing to exempt the dissenters from the operation of the test.

PREFACE.

It is now, I think, agreed on all hands that the design of the Bishop of Bangor's Sermon before the king was to make way for the repeal of the test act: his lordship seems to own this in his Answer to the Representation. And however he has, with more than Christian prudence, avoided declaring his own opinion in many things laid to his charge in the Representation, yet in this particular he has spoken out, and is willing to be understood by all.

This, together with other reasons, which every reader knows as well as I, has induced me to enter into the consideration of this point; hoping that a clear state of this case might be of service to the friends of our constitution, and guard them against the prejudices and popular outcries raised against those statutes which are the security of the established church, and the envy of those who hate it.

The corporation and test act, and others of the like kind, were founded on the experience the nation had of the spirit and temper of the many sectaries amongst us. This made it impossible to avoid speaking of that behavior of dissenters which gave occasion to these acts; but I have endeavored so to speak of it as to give no just offence; and if any shall mislike the calling to mind, even in the tenderest manner, the miscarriages of former times, let him consider who are to blame, whether those who defend the constitution, or those who by their violent attack on it have made such defence necessary.

It was once in my thoughts to have considered all the incapacitating laws, as well those relating to papists as those relating to dissenters of all sorts; and to have shown the common reason in which they are founded; but I declined this part of the argument, that I might not give a pretence to the lovers of scandal to raise a clamor, as if an odious comparison was intended between papists and protestant dissenters.

I do not pretend to hope that all the care I have taken or can take, will stop the mouths of the enemies of our constitution; but I have laid in for myself this comfort, under all the reproaches I am to expect, that I have not deserved them; and after this point secured, I hope I may, without being charged with pride and arrogance, have leave to say that I shall not value them.

In the second part I have examined his lordship's reasonings, brought to show how little religion is concerned in oaths: I was chiefly moved by two considerations so to do.

1. This point about the religion of oaths is connected to the case of the test act, and is part of that controversy, and ought therefore to attend on it.

2. I was willing to give the reader a specimen of the bishop's fairness and good reasoning in this controversy. The whole Answer to the Representation is so made up of art, disguise, complaints, and bitter insinuations against the clergy, that whoever shall attempt to reply to it step by step, will find himself in a very low and yet very tedious employment. The world will soon be tired of a controversy that rises to no higher a point than, *I did not mean so*, and *you did mean so;* and a writer must be at a great loss to spend his time, who can be willing to pursue such trifles through a quire of paper.

I will give the reader an instance of his lordship's art and disguise in a very material point, and on which one half of the controversy turns.

The bishop's sermon was intended to rectify the abuse of words in matters of religion, especially of the word church, which had been so altered and diversified, that it conveyed very wrong notions to the minds of Christian people. This he professes to be his design: "It is with this view," says the bishop, "that I have chosen those words in which our Lord himself declared the nature of his own kingdom." Two things then he had to do; to set aside the corrupted notions of the church, and to introduce the true one: these two things he does attempt to do. Let the reader now consider whether his lordship, when he sets forth the true notion of the church in order to remove the false ones, must not necessarily speak of one and

the same sort of church; for to give a man a true notion of one sort of church can never rectify his mistakes about another sort of church; no more than the description of an elephant can convey the true image of a whale. The Committee of Convocation understood his lordship to speak of the same sort of church in both cases, viz. of the visible church; and they found his true notion of a church (as he calls it) to be inconsistent with the very being of a visible church. His lordship, I suppose, on consideration found so too, and yet he was to answer the Representation. What does he do then? Why he roundly affirms that "what he said about inconsistent images, by daily additions, united in the notion of the church of Christ," related to "modern notions—of particular churches," that is, visible churches; for all particular churches are such. But as to his true notion of a church, he professes, "that he pretends in those words to describe no other but the universal invisible church."

So then by this account his lordship, in order to rectify the mistakes about particular visible churches, gives us a true notion of the universal invisible church; though if I may have leave to guess, the bishop's great concern was to be invisible himself, and to hide from the eyes of the world what he was ashamed to own and defend. This ill-applied distinction is the foundation of his Answer to the first charge in the Representation; and the reader may judge of the Answer by seeing the ground on which it stands.

But his lordship, not content thus to misrepresent himself, and to take shelter in the darkness which he spreads around him, is perpetually lamenting over the frailties of those Christian divines who found any thing to dislike in his performances. To complain, to pity, to lament, are, you know, most tender things, and such as will make women and children cry. What advantage are such tears in a controversy about the powers of the church and of the Christian magistrate! And how decently does his lordship call out for such assistance!

But mistake not, reader; his lordship can do more than complain. These lamentations often end in the bitterest reflexions:

——— Hæ nugæ seria ducunt
In mala :———

I will transcribe one passage from his lordship, that the world may judge from what spirit it proceeds.

"I confess myself surprised and astonished in a very particular manner at this part of the Representation, and cannot but stop a few moments to lament the fate of Christianity and of the protestant cause, and even of the clergy themselves, when it shall be insinuated in the world, from the authority of this very report, that their aim is to obtain such a regard to themselves as is inconsistent with a close and immediate regard to Christ himself; and that they take it as an injury to their order, that the Christian people are encouraged to show themselves subjects of Christ, in the great affair of salvation, without fear of man's judgment."

Here you see his lordship is surprised, astonished; he stops short to lament the fate of Christianity, of the protestant cause; nay, (such is his charity,) even of the clergy themselves, whenever those insinuations shall be made to the world which he himself in the very next words does expressly make. When he saw and declared how much the fate of Christianity and the protestant cause, and of the clergy, depended on such insinuations, how could he, a Christian, a protestant, and a bishop, make those very insinuations, and that too when he had no just ground or pretence so to do; when he knew in his conscience there was no such aim in the report as he insinuates? Will such reflexions as these pass for charity, because they are introduced with surprise, astonishment, and lamentation? Let me for ever want such charity!

It is with the same degree of goodness that his lordship professes that "he cannot by any means persuade himself to call in question what they (the Committee) so seriously profess:" and as soon as he has made this appearance for himself, he goes on to give all the reasons he can think of, I may say all he could invent, (for some are false in fact,) why nobody else should believe them. How compassionate a part is this, to profess that you believe a man, and then to labor to show his falseness to all the world! I wish his lordship would seriously

consider this part of his conduct as it becomes him to do, and not think it sufficient, because it serves present purposes, to make only "an appearance of charity."*

There will be other opportunities of considering this matter, and I hope by other hands: I am so little prepared for it myself, that I should be glad to be prevented.

I have nothing more to add but to acquaint the reader that where the bishop's words are quoted without naming any particular book of his, his Answer to the Representation is always intended.

* Postscript to Pilloniere.

A VINDICATION

OF THE CORPORATION AND TEST ACTS, IN ANSWER TO THE BISHOP OF BANGOR'S REASONS FOR THE REPEAL OF THEM: TO WHICH IS ADDED A SECOND PART, CONCERNING THE RELIGION OF OATHS.

HAD the question relating to the test been argued on political reasons only, I should not have been a party to the dispute; but when concern for religion was brought in, and secular views were carried on under the appearance of zeal to prevent abuses in the solemn worship of Christians; and when the Bishop of Bangor had called on me in particular to speak to this point, which he supposed I could not do consistently with renouncing all pretences to persecution; I thought I might without offence endeavor to justify the legislature against the heavy charge of turning aside a sacred institution of the gospel "from its original and natural design, to a purpose against its own nature, and contrary to the end proposed by the ordainer himself."*

Could this charge be made good, no Christian would want any other reason to be given for the repeal of the test act. The law which introduces an abuse of religion, which perverts a sacred institution of the gospel, can be no security to the church; and therefore the friends of the church ought to be the foremost in such circumstances to part with it. Whether this be the case or no, it is part of the design of these papers to examine.

To carry the reader directly to the point in dispute, I must tell him it had been observed as a consequence of the bishop's doctrine, that "no religious qualifications (must) any longer (be) insisted on."†

* Page 190. † Dr. Snape's first Letter, p. 37.

The bishop in his Answer,* in order to load another assertion, gives this as a very bad character of it: "that it is worthy of him who contends professedly for making religion a civil test, for debasing the most sacred thing in the world into a political tool and an engine of state."

To pass by every thing in this reflexion but the reasoning mixed with it, it is evident that the bishop's argument depends on this principle, that religion ought not to be made a civil test.

In answer to which I replied, "is not religion the test in every case where an oath is required?" †

His lordship now affirms that what he said "against making religion a civil test referred solely to the sacramental test." ‡ On what reason I cannot imagine; for I will not suppose him to think that there is no religion but the sacrament, or that any religion but the sacrament may be debased into a political tool and an engine of state.

This account brings down the state of this part of the controversy to the bishop's last performance. I shall consider what he has advanced before I take leave; in the meanwhile, that the world may know on what subject we dispute, it is necessary to take our rise a little higher, and to state the fact of the case about which we differ.

The laws relating to this subject have not been distinctly considered by the writers in this controversy about the test. They seem to argue merely on popular mistakes, and do (as it serves their purpose best) sometimes call the sacrament the test, and sometimes the qualification for an office; whereas it cannot be both, because there is a real distinction between the test and the thing to be testified by it; it is therefore necessary to show the true design and intent of the legislature in requiring the sacramental test.

By the 13 Car. II. stat. 2. cap. 1. it is enacted that no person shall in "any corporation be elected mayor, alderman, &c. who shall not within a year before his election have taken the sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the rites of the church of England."

* Answer to Dr. Snape's Letter, p. 45.

† Considerations, &c. ‡ Page 185.

By the 25th Car. II. cap. 2. it is enacted "that all and every person——that shall bear any office——civil or military, &c. shall take the oaths of supremacy and allegiance——and shall also receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the usage of the church of England," &c. and make proof of his having received as is therein appointed, on pain of being incapable of the office, and other penalties in the act expressed; this statute is not to extend to inferior offices, as is expressly declared in the last clause.

The latter of these acts is declared by the act of toleration itself to extend to protestant dissenters. The former expressly relates to them; and both are declared, 10 Annæ, cap. 2. "to be made for the security of the church of England as by law established."

These acts then being made for the security of the church as by law established, that is, for the security of the ecclesiastical constitution of the realm; the intention plainly was to keep non-conformists of all sorts, (whose principles and affection to their own ways cannot but lead them to use any power put into their own hands to the hurt of the established church, from which they have separated,) out of offices civil and military, and out of the government and direction of corporations; "to the end that the succession in such corporations may be most probably perpetuated in the hands of persons well affected to his Majesty and the established government,* and for preservation of the public peace both in church and state:"† where his lordship may please to observe that affection to the established government includes a concern for the public peace both of church and state; and that these acts, though especially regarding the established church, are yet in the sense and eye of the law acts for the preservation of the established government of these realms, which was always understood to include matters ecclesiastical as well as civil.

It being resolved then by the legislature that places of power and trust should be in the hands of such only as were well affected to the ecclesiastical constitution, it became necessary to consider what should be taken as a sufficient proof of any man's

* Preamble to Corporation Act. † Ibid. p. 2.

being so affected; without this the provision would have been void and ineffectual, and we should have had a law which could never have been put in execution.

Visible communion with any church or society of Christians is the best proof that man can give to man of his being a well-wisher to the constitution of such church or society. But then once or twice going to church will not amount to such proof; it being well known that many who dislike the constitution of our church, can permit themselves to be present now and then at part or at all of the common service. And in all things of this nature, it is impossible to settle the precise number of particular acts which constitute or denote the habit: in this case therefore the legislature could not say how often going to church made a churchman; or had they named a great number of such acts as the test required, it must have been very hard, almost impossible for the persons concerned to give a legal proof.

The only thing then that remained was to consider what particular act of church communion would be the most probable evidence that a man was sincerely well affected to the established church.

In this view the sacrament of the Lord's Supper naturally offered itself; it is that part of religious worship which the generality of Christians perform with the greatest devotion, and to which they think themselves most obliged to approach with sincerity and uprightness of heart. To this it may be added, that as a distinction was intended to be made between those who approved and those who did not approve the ecclesiastical constitution of these kingdoms, so it was well known that the latter had as strong prejudices against the usage of the church in the celebration of the sacrament, as against any other usage of it whatever, and yet were supposed to have the same awful reverence for the institution itself; so that it was reasonably presumed that no dissenter of any sort would easily be led to such an act of insincerity as receiving the sacrament in a manner condemned by himself.

It was then enacted that whoever had an office civil or military, or was to be mayor, &c. in a corporation town, should make sufficient proof of his having received, within a certain time prescribed, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, accord-

ing to the rites of the church of England, as it is limited 13 Car. II. according to the usage of the church of England, as it is expressed 25 Car. II.

1. It must here be observed that barely receiving the sacrament (as the bishop and some others suppose) is not the test required by the act: every man as a Christian is supposed to receive it somewhere, and therefore barely receiving the sacrament could be no test of any man's affection to the ecclesiastical constitution of this kingdom. But the test lies chiefly on these words, according to the 'usage and rites of the church of England;' and it was supposed that no man would in such manner receive it but a member of the church of England.

2. That receiving the sacrament according to the usage of the church of England is not the qualification for an office within the intent of the act, but only the proof of such qualification: the qualification required is, that the person be well affected to the ecclesiastical state and constitution of these realms; and the receiving the sacrament according to the rites of the established church is the proof or test required that he is so.

This is so clearly the case, that a man may receive the sacrament so as to give proof of the qualification made necessary by the corporation act, without knowing or even suspecting that he was then giving a test required by law; for that act appoints the receiving to be within one year before election to an office: so that one who receives the sacrament, not dreaming that he may or ever shall be elected to an office, yet if he is elected to an office within a year, such receiving shall stand and be accepted as the test required.

This is plain, I say, from the view of the acts; but to put a matter of such consequence in the present debate out of doubt, I must refer the reader to the 3rd Jac. I. cap. 4.: the first act, I think, (though I pretend not to have carefully examined this particular,) that brought in a sacramental test.

The reason for it is set forth in these words: "and where divers persons, popishly affected, do nevertheless, the better to cover and hide their false hearts, and with the more safety to attend the opportunity to execute their mischievous designs, repair sometimes to church to escape the penalty of the laws

in that behalf provided—for the better discovery of such persons, &c. be it enacted—that every popish recusant—who shall conform, and repair to the church, shall once in every year at least—receive the sacrament."

Here it is evident that receiving the sacrament is required only as a test of conformity; for this act does not require any thing more in popish recusants than conformity; which was the very thing by which before they became qualified for the advantages of English subjects. This act therefore introduces no new qualification, but requires a stronger proof or test of the old one.

The same thing appears yet more expressly by 7 Jac. I. cap. 2. "Forasmuch as naturalising of strangers, and restoring to blood persons attainted, have been ever reputed matters of mere grace and favor, which are not fit to be bestowed on any others than such as are of the religion now established in this realm—"

Here, you see, the qualification for such favor is, that the person to have the grant shall be of the religion established:

"Be it therefore enacted," says the statute, "that no person — shall be naturalised or restored in blood — unless he has received the sacrament — within one month before any bill exhibited for that purpose:" that is, be it enacted that he shall receive the sacrament — in order to prove his being of the established religion.

On the whole it is very plain that the receiving the sacrament was never esteemed a qualification in our law, but a proof and test of that qualification, (viz. conformity to the church established,) which the law in many cases requires. Thus the case stands on the foot of these laws.

And if the reader will now turn his eyes to the bishop's strong declaration against the test, he will find him arguing (as is usual with him) against something which no law either supposes or requires. "I now repeat it," says he "before the world," &c.

Here his lordship speaks as if he thought that the celebration of the sacrament ordained and confined by our lord, to the serious remembrance of his death, was ordained to something else by the above-mentioned laws; whereas they suppose

it to be received with such devotion and to such purposes only as Christ ordained: and I desire his lordship to show that any of the acts mentioned forbid it to be received in remembrance of Christ's death, or require it to be received with any contrary purpose of heart whatever.

In like manner that *worthy* person Mr. Sykes, who may be supposed to know his lordship's meaning, tells us wherein the abuse of the sacrament introduced by these laws does consist. "We are," he says, "to remember we are made justices or captains, or have civil employments or preferments bestowed on us. What is this but perverting the most sacred part and most solemn duty of Christianity, to make it a tool to politicians?" &c.—Third letter.

I must leave this worthy person to justify this open attack on the honor of the legislature, by which they are expressly declared to be guilty of "perverting the most sacred part and most solemn duty of Christianity;" since he will hardly accept of any excuse that comes from me in his behalf; though, if he would permit me to do him a good office, I could very sincerely say that I believe he knew nothing of the matter.

I have heard much and just complaint of the iniquity of men who have come to the holy sacrament without devotion, nay sometimes with open contempt of it, merely to satisfy the letter of these laws; but never till now was the legislature so openly arraigned, and charged with establishing guilt and hypocrisy by a law. I presume his lordship and his friend may in the course of their lives have received the sacrament in order to give that test which these laws require: I desire they would tell the world whether, when they so received, they did it in remembrance only that some preferment was bestowed on them, and without remembrance of the death of Christ or no. If they shall answer for themselves that they received with no other sentiments than what are agreeable to and ought to attend on the celebration of this institution of Christ, why then are the laws accused as perverting the end and use of the institution, since the law and the end of the institution may and ought to be complied with at the same time? But if they did really receive with those *worldly views* which they charge the laws with introducing, I heartily lament their case, and wish they may

never be called on to answer to one greater than is on earth.

It is worth observing here, that the argument urged in this case by his lordship and others, is just as strong against the use of oaths; which ought not, on these principles, to be required as a test of a man's veracity, because thereby they become an instrument by means of which some particular sort of men, as his lordship speaks, (especially atheists and infidels,) get into estates, the titles to which are determined on oath. And the legislature may as justly be charged with all the perjury of corrupt witnesses as with the hypocrisy of corrupt communicants.

The two questions which naturally arise from the true state of the case are these:

1. Whether it be lawful to confine offices of power and trust in the government to such as are obedient and well affected to the ecclesiastical state and constitution of the realm.

2. Supposing this to be lawful, whether it be also lawful to require of any man who is willing to accept an office civil or military, that he should communicate with the established church, and particularly that he should receive the sacrament according to the usage of it, in order to prove such his obedience and good affection to the ecclesiastical constitution.

This last question the bishop intirely mistakes, and speaks as if receiving the sacrament were itself the qualification for an office, to which (office) he tells us, "this institution has no more relation than the complexion of men's faces, or the color of their hair;" and therefore seems to charge the legislature with perverting this holy institution.

But it ought here to be observed that receiving the sacrament according to the usage of the church of England, is not appointed to be a test of any thing but what it always ought (whether required by law or no) to be a test of: receiving the sacrament, &c. is not a test of a man's being a willing member of the established church, in force or in consequence of the law, but in force and in consequence of that sincerity which ought always to attend it; and this presumption, that he who receives in the church is of the church, is the ground and the foundation, and not the effect of the law. So in the parallel case, an oath

is not appointed by law to be a test of a man's veracity, but it is required in some cases by law, because it is in its own nature such a test.

Men are not supposed to be of one church, and communicate with another: his lordship has made use of this very argument in the case of Mr. Pilloniere, and concludes him to be no Jesuit, because he has often received the sacrament in the church of England. On this presumption the corporation and test acts are founded; they require the evidence of a man's receiving the sacrament according to the usage of the church of England, only to prove that he is a member of that church. They leave the sacrament to the uses for which it is ordained, and lay hold on the act of receiving only as an evidence of a man's being in communion of that church in which he receives.

When the doctrine of occasional conformity for places prevailed, it broke in on this evidence, just as the doctrine of equivocation and mental reservation broke in on the evidence of an oath; and there was the same reason for the legislature to take notice of and prevent the one abuse as the other. The act against occasional conformity (as it is commonly called) does not forbid occasional conformity as such, but leaves all men to the same liberty they had before to communicate occasionally with the church; and therefore it is nothing to the purpose to consider whether occasional conformity be a lawful or unlawful practice. All that the legislature intended by that statute was to prevent their being imposed on by the act of an occasional conformist: they required the evidence of a man's receiving according to the usage of the church of England, as a proof of his being of that communion. The act of an occasional conformist in receiving, &c. came up to the letter of the law, and yet was no proof of what they expected.

When experience had shown how easily the law was evaded by the practice of occasional conformists, the legislature took care to prevent the abuse, and to provide that men in office, &c. should no longer continue in their offices than they adhered to the communion of the established Church: that is, that they should perform the condition required by the former laws, and for performance of which they were understood to give the

assurance and evidence of their having received the sacrament according to the usage of the church of England.

And this shows that a better or stronger test was not to be found; for when this was evaded, the legislature had nothing to add to it, and could only by an after provision secure it against a practice which was an open affront to the law of the country.

The occasional bill therefore is only a guard to the test act; and those who plead for the repeal of this bill only, do in effect desire that all men may be at liberty to give the proof required by the law of their adherence to the established church, and yet be at liberty not to adhere to it. Whether this can proceed from a concern for sincerity, or for the honor of the gospel institution, I leave the world to judge.

Thus the case stands with respect to the laws now in force; and it remains on his lordship and his friends to show that any abuse of the sacrament is introduced by these laws; and on his lordship in particular to make good his heavy charge, that this "is to turn it (the holy sacrament) from its original and natural design, to a purpose against its own nature, and contrary to the end proposed by the ordainer himself."

As to the abuses brought in by the iniquity of men, who approach the holy table merely to answer the letter of these laws, without any piety or devotion, or true sense of what they are doing, I see them and I lament them; and they are sad instances of the decay of the spirit of Christianity among us: but still I say these men are not made wicked by the law; but being wicked, they abuse as well the law of their country as the institution of the gospel: and if the iniquity of men in abusing any law be sufficient reason for abrogating such law, I would fain know what law ought to stand in force. What perjuries, what frauds, what cheats, are made use of to elude the many laws for imposing customs on trade? Let his lordship then turn advocate for the removal of these laws also; and let him say that no temporal advantage or convenience to the state can justify the great abuse of religion, and the manifest breach of plain duties occasioned (or to express his own sense, introduced) by these laws: let him plead also for abolishing the use of oaths, since perjury is not a more crying than it is a common

sin; nay, let him go through all the laws of his country till he has settled the state on the same bottom that he has placed the church, and can say with respect to both, that "no one more than another hath authority to judge, censure, or punish the servants of another master."

The profanation of the Lord's Supper creates a horror in every serious Christian mind; and God forbid that any word should drop from me, as if I could be easy and contented in seeing so much hypocrisy and wickedness. This is a case which wants a remedy; but as the laws requiring the sacramental test do not make men wicked and profane, so neither will removing those laws make them pious or holy. The remedy must be applied to the men; it is the wickedness of the receiver that calls for correction; and his lordship has it to consider what service he has done to religion by beating down the authority both of church and state to preserve true religion, in an age that seems to want it so very much.

In the meanwhile I will go on (since his lordship calls on me so to do,) to declare my sense in this matter, and the reasons on which it is founded; hoping that it may be at least as inoffensive for me to endeavor to justify the laws of my country, as it is for his lordship to arraign and to condemn them. And should all I say prove to be vain words and of none effect; should I see the church left naked and defenceless, its walls broken down, and the hedge which was placed about it pulled up; yet my fruitless pains shall yield me this satisfaction, that I labored for the 'peace of Jerusalem;' nor shall any man be able to suggest that I was bribed by the prospect of honors and preferments.

The questions arising from the true state of this case, are (as I before observed) two.

The first is this:

I. Whether it be lawful to confine offices of power and trust in the government to such as are obedient and well affected to the ecclesiastical state and constitution of the realm.

This question will be determined by the resolution of two points.

1. *Whether it* be lawful in any case to make laws by which *some persons shall* be rendered incapable of offices.

2. Whether it be reasonable in the case before us.

There is nothing that more nearly affects the good and welfare of every good government, and consequently nothing that ought to be their more immediate care, than to see the powers (which must necessarily in every community be trusted somewhere) placed in proper hands. Every man has an interest in desiring that there should be upright judges to execute the laws already in force; and wise, prudent, disinterested men to make new laws or abrogate old ones, as the good of the whole shall require. It is a right vested in every community as such, to consider and declare what conditions and qualifications shall be required in all persons to be admitted to offices of trust and power in the government; and therefore a capacity to serve the public in places of trust and power, which is not limitable by the constitution, when there are just reasons to limit it, is such a capacity as is inconsistent with all forms of government in the world. As men in a state of nature (for I am willing to argue on that hypothesis) are on a foot of equality, so are they when they enter into a formed government, and lay equal claim to all the advantages arising from thence. Say then that all, considered merely as members of the society, have a claim to be equally capable of serving the public, yet still this is such a capacity as nature herself has set bounds and limits to by the very distinction she has made in the natural parts and abilities of men. It requires wise men to manage the public concerns, and men of courage to conduct the public arms; it is therefore necessary to exclude fools from the council-board and cowards from the army. This, I say, is a limitation made by nature.

But it equally concerns the public to have men well affected to the government in places of power and trust. A courageous man who hates his country, is at least as unfit to be trusted with the military force as a coward; and a wise man who would betray his prince, ought rather to be excluded from his councils than a fool. The consequence of which is, that either no government has a right to preserve itself against the disaffection of any subject, or else that every government has a right to exclude from offices of power and trust such as shall render themselves justly suspected of disaffection to the public.

To talk then in the present case of the common rights of subjects is begging the question, and supposing that dissenters are excluded without any reason, which is making a short case of it indeed. The true point is this: allowing all subjects to be equally capable, as such, of serving the public, and that the government ought not to limit this capacity without good reason, to inquire whether the corporation and test acts are founded on reasons sufficient to justify the legislature in the limitations by them made on this capacity of some subjects.

His lordship's reasoning from the common rights of subjects, and his general declarations against debarring men from their civil rights, are arguments which do by no means come up to the present purpose.

A submission of private rights to the public is the fundamental article of government; and therefore no subject has a right to defend even his life or property as he thinks fit, but must go in the method prescribed or permitted by the law. How absurd is it then to talk of a right to be capable of places, not subject to the like restraints or limitations? The matter is not mended by calling this a natural right, (a phrase much in fashion,) for there is no natural right that may not be lost in whole or in part. Nay, some rights are restrained merely for the sake of public convenience, without supposition of any fault or transgression in any member of the community.

There is not, I presume, a stronger natural right than the right to food and raiment; this is founded in the common necessity of nature; and it is not to be thought that God sent men into the world merely to starve, without giving them a right to use in common so much of it as their necessities require. But now we see that this right is limited and restrained by all governments in the world: property is secured every where by humane laws, and a very unequal division of the good things of life is introduced; the far greater part of mankind live on their labor or by charity; hard as this is, yet the necessity of government justifies the provision; and an Apostle of Christ has given us a rule in consequence of it: 'If any man will not work, *neither let him eat.*'

Is it lawful then to restrain the natural right that every man

has to food and raiment? and is it unlawful to limit the capacity which subjects have to places of power and trust in the government? There is indeed so much compassion and equity left for cases of natural necessity, that in the last extremity we still say, necessity has no law; but it must be a sad world, whenever avarice and the lust of power obtain the same privilege.

His lordship perhaps will say that he does not plead against restraints of this sort in general, but that he confined himself solely to the sacramental test, and to cases where religion is concerned: I have the more reason to expect this, because I have been already so served, when I argued against a general principle laid down by himself, that religion ought not to be a civil test; the next time his lordship appeared in public, he affirmed that by religion he meant solely the sacramental test.

But let the reader take notice that the argument against the sacramental test drawn from the right of all subjects to a capacity of holding offices of power and trust, is an argument against this test considered as a limitation of that right; and it is founded in this, or in nothing, that all such limitations are unlawful: for if all are not unlawful, perhaps this may not be unlawful; and consequently no argument can lie against it, considered merely as such a limitation. It is one thing then to object against the sacramental test because religion ought not to be made an instrument of excluding men from offices, and another to say in general that men ought not on any account to be excluded: his lordship has declared against both very distinctly: "I have professed my judgment — against such unjust or false security as either debars men from their civil rights, or debases a solemn institution of Christ," &c.

Here are plainly two things which in his lordship's opinion render all methods used for the security of any establishment unjust or false: the first is, when men are debarred from their civil rights; the second is, when a solemn institution, &c. is debased.

It is then, it seems, his lordship's judgment that all security is unjust which debars men from their civil rights; that is, that makes them incapable of holding offices of power and trust: the consequence of which is, that no government has

any right to secure itself by excluding from offices such as they judge unqualified, for no goverment can have a right to an unjust security. If his lordship can find any thing in his own writings inconsistent with this doctrine, (as much as there is to be found,) that is his concern, and not mine.

Among all the capacities of this sort known in our constitution, those which are hereditary are the strongest and most favored by the law: among these the capacity of succeeding to the crown is the most sacred. This his lordship and others have taken pains to prove subject to limitations; and it is well known that his Majesty enjoys the crown in virtue of such limitations. I would only ask his lordship whether the royal family be the only one in the kingdom liable to such restrictions? whether it be highly reasonable, for the sake of public good, to limit the capacity of succeeding to the crown, and highly unreasonable, though there be the like occasion for it, to limit the capacity of private men to be captains or colonels?

To me this case is so very plain, that I will not so far suspect any reader's judgment as to dwell longer on it, but will go on to consider in what manner this right, which the state has over the capacity of all its subjects, is to be exercised.

They who in any nation have the legislative power intrusted with them, are bound to take care of the welfare and preservation of the community over which they are placed. Men ought not to be punished for any offence against the public without plain proof that they have offended; for all punishments must follow the strict rules of justice: but all governments have a right (and all wise governments will make use of it) to provide against probable dangers to the state; in consequence of which they have a right to provide that all power in the state shall be lodged in such hands only as they reasonably judge to be well affected; and here the rules of prudence must govern. And this may help his lordship to see (what he seems to be at a great loss to understand) how consistent it is in me to declare against punishing men in their lives or fortunes for those reasons, which, nevertheless, I think to be good reasons for excluding them from places of power and trust. It would be very unreasonable to beat a man because he has an infectious distemper; yet it is

very reasonable to deny him a place in the family on this account; for in one case I should injure him, in the other I only take care of myself. The exercise then of this right is matter of prudence in the government: it may be abused by wantonness and partiality, as every thing else may that ever I heard of; but it will not follow, because this right may be abused, that therefore there is nor ought to be no such right in the community.

But the right of the state to limit the subject's capacity of holding places of power and trust being supposed, it still remains to be considered whether they had sufficient reason for what they did in the case before us.

The government of England is in the hands of Christians; and so far, I hope, there is no fault. When they, in whom this power was lodged, found it necessary to forsake the errors of the church of Rome, and to throw off the heavy yoke of popish power under which they had been long oppressed, they saw at the same time that religion could not be preserved without some settled order and discipline; and though the Reformation claimed the use of the Scriptures as the undoubted right of every Christian who was capable of using them, yet they had sense enough to know that to leave every man to make the best of his Bible, without any farther direction or restraint, would naturally tend to confusion, and fill the kingdom with all the wild conceits that ignorance and enthusiasm could produce. They considered farther, that it was the will of Christ that there should be a visible church; and though they had withdrawn from the church of Rome as being corrupt, yet they were obliged to visible communion; for these reasons they continued the national church freed from the errors and the corruptions of Rome, under a government and discipline formed on the platform of primitive Christianity. This church was established by law; and the people of England were bound to communion with it as Christian subjects; so bound, I mean, that nothing but a persuasion of errors and corruptions in the church could excuse a separation from it.

On these principles the reformation here proceeded; the crown and the people found it necessary to reject the papal power together with the corruptions of the Romish church;

but they found it necessary too to preserve an authority in church matters; and to settle an ecclesiastical government even for the better reformation of religion. Some indeed there were in the early days of the Reformation, who pleaded for Christian liberty in such manner as to leave no room for Christian discipline; but these made no great figure, and were esteemed then as mere fanatics. Had they who conducted the Reformation set out on these prejudices, (for I desire to be excused from calling them principles,) by this time I verily believe Christianity itself had been lost among us; and the supremacy vested in every man in his own behalf had long since established a consummate stupidity and ignorance; but who would have been the happier for it, I profess myself at a loss to imagine.*

The protestant church of England has enjoyed but little peace from its first establishment. In the days of Edward VI. the controversy about vestments, &c. began, though it was managed with another kind of spirit than what afterwards appeared in that cause. In Queen Mary's time this church was destroyed, and suffered not only in the ruin of its establishment and in the members lost by persecution, but in those also who fled from home, and brought back those notions which have given this church and nation so much trouble ever since. These were one great occasion of the disturbances in Queen Elizabeth's reign: to what height they were carried, and how they affected the peace of those times, the reader may see in Archbishop Whitgift's life, just published by our diligent and learned historian, the Rev. Mr. Strype. Under the management of James I. the disaffection to the established church grew strong; and in the days of his unfortunate son, a prince who deserved a better fate, it prevailed as well against the crown as the mitre.

It is very true that religion was not the whole of that unhappy rupture between the king and his people; occasion there was for complaint with respect to civil rights; nor is it my intention to dissemble here what the noble historian of those times has

* "I am fully satisfied, that till a consummate stupidity and ignorance can be established," &c.—Bishop's Answer.

so freely and so impartially disclosed: but then it is evident to all that those disputes had ended in the happy confirmation of the subject's rights, had not the pretences of religion and enthusiasm mixed themselves in the quarrel, and put the nation into such a fever that nothing but the loss of blood could recover them again to their cool senses.

It is with reluctance that I enter into this part of the argument; and I wish I could draw a curtain before the oppressions and calamities which the nation suffered under in that long hour of darkness. But should I be silent, yet almost every gentleman's family wears still the scars of that frenzy, and can name the ancestor who lost his life, the estate that was sequestered, the house that was pillaged or pulled down; and this too was acted under the pretence of making way for the free profession of the gospel; of which however there was hardly any visible sign in the kingdom except only this, that our kings were bound in chains, and our nobles with links of iron.

After more than twelve years of continual night the day began to break, and the sound of liberty was heard throughout the nation: in a word, the king who was expelled, the nobles and the gentry who were driven into banishment, or lived at home sequestered or imprisoned, were restored to their ancient rights; and England became England again. What now was the consequence? Why the cruelties, the oppressions, and devastations of many years were all buried in silence and oblivion; private resentments and private injuries were given up to the public good; the rich sequestrator and the harassed gentleman lived like neighbors and friends, and the prophecy seemed fulfilled, that the lion and the lambs should play together. The only redress which the king and his people sought for all their wrongs, was to guard themselves from falling into the same mischiefs again; for this purpose expressly the corporation act was made, "for prevention," as the words of the act are, "of the like mischief for the time to come, and for preservation of the public peace both in church and state:" —that act which his lordship now thinks to be an invasion of the subject's right, and contrary to the maxims of Christ Jesus. And yet, in the name of all that ever was called Christian charity, what less could be done? Was it so extremely wicked

to guard against injury and oppression? Was it so irreligious to defend that religion which the nation received as delivered by Christ, from force and violence, and to suppress the many kinds of injustice practised on this people: and which would sound too harshly should they be distinctly enumerated? Self-defence is a darling topic with his lordship, and I desire him to show that in this act any thing was done by the gentlemen of the church of England, which they had not found by woful experience to be necessary for their preservation. The general pardon was so far from producing the desired effect, that it is declared by the legislature as the ground of the corporation act, "that notwithstanding all his Majesty's endeavors and unparalleled indulgence in pardoning all that is past, nevertheless many evil spirits are still working."

This then was the case in fact: the crown, the nobility, the gentry, and the clergy of England had suffered for above twelve years under such oppression and cruelty as will be easily called to mind by the reader, and which I have no inclination to aggravate or to describe: and when the government returned to its natural channel again, all was forgiven, and Christian charity triumphed over every thing but the restless spirit of some among us; which since the mercy and good nature of the nation could not subdue, it became necessary that their wisdom and prudence should prevent; for these reasons the corporation act was made, to keep the power out of those hands which had used it so very ill. This I say was the case: and let heaven and earth judge of the equity of the proceedings; and let his lordship make out his charge that this was invading the subject's right, and acting contrary to the maxims of Christ.

But however justifiable this might be on the close of the troubles, and whilst things continued to be in agitation, yet perhaps it will be said that now the case is altered; the disaffection to the church is abated; and we have nothing to fear from dissenters, though places of power and trust in the government should be lodged in their hands. I wish this were all true, and am willing to allow that there are many among them who are sincere in their professions of moderation. But, alas! it is one thing to know how we would use power if we had it, and another to know how to use it when we have it. But to

let this pass; have any of the dissenters declared that they are for maintaining the church as by law established? No, certainly: the utmost that has been pleaded in their behalf is, "that their principles amount to those of a general toleration to all peaceable subjects."* I rejoice in this happy reformation of their principles; but let me ask the gentlemen of South Britain what they are like to get by accepting of a toleration for their religion instead of an establishment, and that too limited to the condition of being peaceable subjects; a condition indeed highly reasonable in itself, but which may be easily expounded away, and probably would be so, unless they could appear to be highly satisfied with their hard bargain. Besides, this declaration for toleration stands only on the authority of the dissenters' address to the king; an authority they are not willing to abide by in all cases, and never more complain than when they are pressed with a like argument, founded on their addresses to James the Second.

The dissenters are still fond of their own principles and opinions; and we have once seen how that fondness transported them when power was in their hands. Why then are we not to suppose that they would use power again, if put into their hands, to set up what they account pure religion; and to expel what not only they, but others of higher rank and under greater obligations to the church, have treated as popish and superstitious.

It is well known that in the late times there was a solemn league and covenant entered into by many to root out the established church of England, and never more to permit its return. At the restoration some there were who left their livings rather than depart from the terms of this engagement. Has their steady adherence to these obligations been blamed or condemned by their brethren of these times? No; so far from it, that they have labored to adorn the lives and characters of these men; their sufferings for this cause have been magnified and extolled; and they have been represented to the public as confessors suffering for righteousness' sake; as lights shining in the dark, and of whom the world was not worthy. And now let

* The Dissenters' Reasons, by Mr. Peirce.

any body draw the natural consequence from this: is it reasonable to think that those who have consecrated their forefathers' zeal to destroy the established church, and offered up so much incense to it in the eye of the world, do themselves condemn those principles which they do so adore in others?

It has of late years been a prevailing opinion among some members of the church of England, that the dissenters had worn off their rigid zeal against the church, and that there was little more left in the controversy than the difficulty about re-ordination, and the dispute about some indifferent rites and ceremonies: among the rest Dr. Snape seems to have been in this mistake; but by this time I presume he is convinced of his error, since Mr. Peirce has told him how highly affronting to the dissenters such an opinion of them is: "how could you suggest," says he, "that we do not so much as pretend the terms of your communion are sinful?"* And he goes on to give instances of sinful terms in our communion; and then in the name of all his brethren, he passes a judgment that makes the whole ecclesiastical constitution sinful: "you may depend on it that the great body of the dissenters judge the terms of communion to be sinfully imposed." This strikes not at one or at many of our terms of communion, but at the whole establishment; the foundation itself is sin, and nothing good can be raised on it; and therefore he very frankly and consistently declares, "we rejoice to see the foundations shaken, and the fabric sinking, as we never doubted but it would some time or other." What hopes, what triumphs are these! But to go on: he charges the church with persecution, and all who differ from the Bishop of Bangor in the present controversy as maintainers of it; agreeably to which he represents the dissenters as the holy remnant 'who have not bowed the knee to Baal:' so that the church of England in this comparison (and should seem therefore in this gentleman's opinion) is an idolatress, and her priests are the *priests* of Baal.

The church of England owns itself to be subject to the civil power in making canons and constitutions for external government and discipline; whether the state has reason to like the

* The Dissenters' Reasons, &c. by James Peirce.

church the worse for this, let others judge. But those who are offended at it may assure themselves they shall have no such reason of complaint against the dissenters; they pretend to a power and discipline equally great and extensive with that claimed or used by the established church; they claim it too independently of the state in every respect, for they claim it all as the law of Christ, over which no human power has authority. For this reason Mr. Peirce professes himself and his brethren unconcerned in the bishop's doctrine, though it takes all "power from men to make laws in matters of conscience." This, says he, "cannot do the least prejudice to us: the government (mind his reason) we plead for is no other than the execution of the laws of Christ." And since this is their opinion, I will venture to say for them that it is likewise their opinion that no power on earth can restrain them in the exercise of any part of that government which they plead for. And without the spirit of prophecy, it is easily foreseen that if ever they have the rule, 'their little finger will be thicker than the loins' of the church: the holiness of their government, its being the execution of the laws of Christ, must make them (whatever they now think) zealous to impose it on all.

This gentleman has the repute of being one of the most considerable among the dissenters, and takes on himself to speak in the name of the rest. I should not have wondered had one of their ignorant mechanics represented the clergy of England as priests of Baal; but it is surprising to hear this from a man of letters, from one who has had opportunities of conversing both with men and books; and it is an intimation at least what purposes are to be served by that power to which some are now so eagerly pleading their right: and let every man who wishes well to the church of England judge from hence what he is to expect if ever offices of power and trust are lodged in dissenters' hands. Will they permit, do you think, the priests of Baal to live unmolested, or will they endure that the church of England, whose foundation is sin, should be permitted to stand. No: then they would tell us that they have no power to remit the laws of Christ; this was not their meaning: *Non hæc in fœdera.*

If dissenters want only to propagate their persuasion by ap-

plying to the reason and understanding of men, they are even now at liberty to do it; and if they can convince the nation that their cause is right, it will give them an influence beyond what the repeal of twenty acts in their behalf can do. Let them then go to work in God's name; we are ready to hear and to consider their arguments; but if they want to back their arguments with power, however we are bound to attend to reason, we certainly have a right to guard against force, and to secure ourselves from having any thing as religion imposed on us. For these reasons, and chiefly for the sake of that experience which we have had, we cannot join with the bishop in calling for a repeal of these acts: they are acts founded on the principles of self defence, and not made to exclude Christians from civil offices "for the sake of their conscientious scruples," as his lordship represents the case to be. Whereas the corporation act says expressly it was for prevention of mischief; such mischief as the nation had then but just recovered from; and not for prevention of conscientious scruples. And if there be no difference between persecuting a man for his opinions, and securing myself from being persecuted for my own, then indeed it is a persecution to exclude men for the sake of their disaffection to the established church from civil power. Persecution is a hard word, but when it comes from words to blows, it is a harder thing. The church of England has felt it; and she has a short memory if she has already forgotten what it is: it is indeed as bad as it can be described to be; and so far am I from being an advocate for it, as I have been publicly and often charged to be, that I can with a clear mind say I have ever pleaded against it.

But surely it must be agreed on all hands that every man has a right (much more every government) to secure himself against persecution, and from having anything as religion imposed on him by undue means. And once more I call on the reader to recollect what passed in those sad days when all the sects among us were laboring for superiority, and making their way over the heads and consciences of their brethren; and when he has thought thereon, let him say with the bishop, (if he sees reason,) that to exclude men from power on account of their persuasions in religion which produced so

much misery and confusion in these kingdoms, is an unjust or false security, and contrary to the maxims of Christ. But if he is not in great haste to come to a conclusion, let him consider that what has been already may probably be expected again from the same causes; and that power in the hands of dissenters has once already ruined church and state. If he thinks they are now grown friends to toleration, and is moved by that argument, yet let him ask himself the reason why he should give up an establishment to accept of a toleration, and why toleration is not as good when it is granted to dissenters as when it is humbly received at their hands. Let him also consider that where the dissenters' principles prevail, no toleration is granted; the kirk has ever protested against it, and used their utmost endeavors to prevent it. If he thinks much weight is to be laid on their late declarations for general toleration, let him remember that the same pleas were used before King Charles the First's time, and yet what were church or nation the better for them? In a word, let him consider whether under these uncertainties it is not wisest to trust himself with the liberty of his own conscience; whether he may not be as sure of shutting out persecution (if that be the concern) by keeping it in his own power to give a free toleration to those who differ from him, as by putting it in the power of others to make him the like grant. But to proceed.

His lordship in his great zeal against all limitations of offices to members of the church established, would do well to remember that the crown itself is subject to this very limitation. By 12, 13 William III. cap. 2. it is provided, "that whosoever shall hereafter come to the possession of this crown shall join in communion with the church of England as by law established."

I trust his lordship will inform the world how it comes to pass that the kings of England have less privilege than any of their subjects; and why that very limitation is just and expedient when applied to the crown, which is so great an oppression, so subversive of natural right, when applied to any of the people.

The crown has the disposal of places of power and trust in the government; and the incapacity for offices which some lie

under in virtue of the test act, is in truth a restraint on the crown in bestowing of offices: and as long as it is thought necessary for the preservation of the established religion to confine the crown itself to the communion of the church of England, so long it cannot be unreasonable to confine the crown from deriving power into such hands as there is reason to think would destroy it: nay, the very reason for confining the crown to the communion of the church of England, is to secure the powers of the government which are lodged in the crown on the side of the establishment; and it seems preposterous to suppose that any power should issue from the crown so confined, into hands not well affected to the church.

I do not find that the bishop or any body else who argues for the repeal of these laws, does so much as pretend to complain of them with respect to the restraint which they bring on the crown in the disposal of offices, nor indeed can any body justly do it; for his majesty's declared affection to our constitution in church and state will never permit him to think any law a burden to himself, which is made for the preservation of public peace both in church and state.

But with respect to the limitation which requires that "the person possessing the crown shall join in communion with the church of England as by law established." The bishop perhaps may say there is a difference in the case, because the receiving the sacrament as a test, and giving evidence thereof, is not required of the crown. It is true it is not; and the reason of the difference is this: in the case of private men the public cannot judge what communion they belong to, and therefore a proof, a test of their communion with the church established is required of them; but a king is a public person, and lives in the eye of all his subjects; and it is as easy to know of any king what communion he belongs to as what kingdom he governs; and consequently no particular test of joining in communion need be required.

I would observe here (what some seem very desirous to forget,) that one great end of the Revolution was to secure and preserve the church established; and that to labor to hurt this church cannot be a mark of friendship to the Revolution. I have turned over some of his lordship's latest pieces to see

whether this part of the argument in the behalf of the Revolution has had any improvement under his hands; and to my great surprise I cannot find he has once had it in his thoughts. He talks indeed of religious rights preserved or restored by the Revolution; but he plainly means such rights as he now pleads for; such as are inconsistent with the establishment of any church, except perhaps the church of England "*truly* so called," as he speaks; and what kind of church that is, neither I nor I believe his lordship can tell; for if the church of England commonly so called is not the church of England truly so called, then the church of England truly so called is some church not yet established, and what it may be who can tell?

The legislature knows no religious rights but what are contained in the establishment of the church of England; and therefore the Lords and Commons tell King William that after the settlement of the crown on himself, &c. in his first year, "his Majesty's good subjects were restored to the full and free possession and enjoyment of their religion, rights and liberties:" 12, 13. Will. III. cap. 2. They knew of no religious rights restored by the settlement of the crown on King William, &c. but what are implied in the people's being restored to the free enjoyment of their religion, as professed in the established church. If his lordship knows of any other, yet he ought not to recommend them as restored at the Revolution, which plainly knew nothing of them.

In a word: if all governments in the world have a right to defend themselves as well against their own subjects as others, and in consequence thereof to provide that the powers of the constitution should be lodged in such hands only as are well affected to the establishment;—if all men have a right to guard their own consciences against the force of such as would impose that for religion which they do not approve;—and if it be reasonable to suppose that those who have once attempted, and succeeded in their attempt, to use their fellow subjects in such manner, are ready to do it again when they have power;—and lastly, if it be justifiable to limit the crown to the communion of the church established in order to secure and preserve the church;—it is on all these reasons justifiable to confine offices of power and trust to the hands of such as are well affected to the

ecclesiastical establishment of this realm; and the statutes which do so confine them are not chargeable with oppression, but are founded in the highest reason, the security and preservation of our constitution.

But besides all this, there is one consideration more arising from the very nature of our constitution, that makes the test with respect to corporations highly reasonable. It is well known what an influence the corporations have in one part of the legislature: there are instances where a very few subjects in a little town are represented in parliament by as many members as the largest county chooses; and this being the constitution, it concerns the whole to take particular care that corporations be under the government and direction of such as are friends to the whole; and to guard those posts especially, which if the adversary possessed, it would make one of them become equal in strength to a thousand. The natural strength of any constitution lies in the affection of the people to it; and it may be allowed that the ecclesiastical establishment (as far as it is in its nature changeable by human laws) ought to be agreeable to the sense of the nation; but no common sense will allow that the little towns of a county ought to govern the consciences of a county; and therefore since many little towns have by our constitution (of which it is not my intent to complain) such an influence, there is nothing more reasonable than to provide that such only as are friends to the establishment in church and state should have the direction of them. Either this is reasonable, or else it is reasonable to affirm that the constitution in church and state ought not to be what the nation likes, but what the towns corporate shall think proper for them.

This consideration may be made more general, and extended to other offices in the state; for though there are many offices which men might execute without being thereby enabled immediately to hurt the constitution, yet the influence which such offices give in the election of parliament men, (a power which accrues not from the particular nature of the office, but from the nature of our constitution,) makes it reasonable that such offices should be confined to the friends of the constitution in church and state. This, I say, is in some degree the case in

general; but it more evidently appears in the case of corporation officers.

The non-conformists of all sorts (including papists as well as others) were computed to be in proportion to the members of the church of England in the year 1676, as one to twenty;* a number in proportion too small to have any natural strength to hurt the constitution; but if they were at liberty, and should apply themselves heartily to gain the corporations, they might soon get such strength as might make them formidable; whilst others relying on their numbers sat securely by. Whether this advantage in these circumstances ought to be given to the one, the twenty, I think, have a very good right to judge.

The case of the corporations, and the influence they have in one part of the legislature ought to be well considered, by such especially as seem willing to part with the test as far as it affects corporations, and to preserve it with respect to other offices. If it be reasonable to keep any power out of dissenters' hands, that power certainly which gives them an influence in the legislature, in making laws for church and state, ought especially to be kept from them; and it must on the least reflexion appear very strange to advance a man to a share in making laws for the nation, and yet to deny him all other power.

Were the dissenters fewer in number than they are; were they one to a thousand, yet I should think it unreasonable and unlawful to endeavor to end the difference by force; and so far am I from disliking the indulgence allowed them, that I like the establishment itself the better for this abatement in the rigor of its laws. But if peace and security of conscience will not satisfy without power and authority in the state, it ought to be no offence to them to be told that we owe a regard to our own consciences as well as theirs; and that though we rejoice in their liberty, yet we see no reason to part with our own security.

I have hitherto spoken of the corporation and test acts in general, and the reasons on which they are founded. There

* This is founded on a survey of the province of Canterbury, which was in the hands of the late excellent Bishop of London, and now in possession of his worthy executor.

will want but little to be said of the 25th of Charles II. in particular; and that only in respect of an objection which concerns that act.

This act, when it was made, related particularly to papists; and his lordship, who can distinguish between a man's religion and the certain necessary effects of it, can see, without doubt, the reasonableness of a test, or any other disqualification in this view. For my own part, as far as the argument for persecution is concerned, I make no difference between one religion and another, and can as little justify hanging a papist merely for his religion as a protestant. If therefore the test act be in truth a persecuting law, it is bad in every view; but if it be only a reasonable provision for the security of the establishment against suspected enemies, it is good in every case where there is probable ground for such suspicion.

I need not say how much the nation is indebted to this act; it has once already saved us from the power of popery, and was a barrier to the protestant religion in all King James's reign: this was so evident that there was nothing this unhappy prince labored so much as the repeal of this act; and when he could not get an English parliament to concur with him, he took a bold step to compass his design, and endeavored to lay it asleep by a dispensing power. His declaration to this purpose is on record in the annals and histories of that time; and if the reader will be at the trouble to turn to it, he will find that the bishop has been beholden to King James's declaration for his arguments against the test.

But this act being designed for papists in particular, it has been complained of that it was extended to protestant dissenters; though it is well known that this effect was foreseen at the time of making the act, and might have easily been prevented, had the legislature intended to prevent it. But let this pass; it cannot be denied that this effect on protestant dissenters was understood at the time the toleration act passed; and yet so far were the legislature from preventing it then, that they expressly declared all protestant dissenters to be liable to it: which declaration was indeed a re-enacting of the test act with respect to the dissenters; and from this time (at least) the test act does as directly affect the dissenters as the papists; and it

is not worth while to dispute with them whether they were put under this act by King Charles or King William. But I recommend it to the bishop to consider the proceedings of that parliament of King William: they were no friends to persecution; they released dissenters from all penalties, yet thought it fit to extend the test act to them: and let him learn from hence (if he pleases) that persecution is one thing, and excluding the ill affected to our establishment from places of power is another: or if he can by no means part with his charge of persecution, I hope he will not for the future single me out to bear it all, but will allow King William and his parliament their due share, which will make his indignation, if not more just, yet more generous; for I am by no means considerable enough to be a proper subject of his lordship's triumphs.

But that it may not be suggested that King William consented to as much as he could obtain from his parliament, and left the test in force, because the times would not admit a repeal; it is proper to inform the reader that he had declared his opinion in this matter before the revolution. When King James attempted to repeal as well the test as the penal laws, he endeavored to gain the approbation of the prince and princess of Orange; and Mr. Stewart by the king's order wrote to Mr. Fagel on that head. Mr. Fagel in his answer delivers their highnesses' sense, that they could wish penal laws removed, but as to the test they had a just aversion to the abrogation of it.

The last paragraph of Mr. Fagel's answer to Mr. Stewart's Letter, printed anno 1687, as taken from the late history of England, is to this effect.

"Lastly," he concluded, "that their highnesses ever had, and were resolved ever to preserve a profound submission to his majesty, as they thought themselves in duty bound by the laws of God and nature; but since the matter that was then in hand related not to the making of new laws, but to the total abrogation of those already made both by king and parliament, their highnesses did not see how it could be expected of them that they should consent to such an abrogation, to which they had so just an aversion; as being a thing that was contrary to all the laws and customs of all Christian states, whether protestants or papists, who admitted none to a share in the go-

vernment or public employments, but those who professed the public and established religion, and endeavored to secure it against all attempts whatsoever."

This letter is, I think, a full answer to such as pretend to say that dissenters from the national church enjoy greater privileges in Holland than they do with us. The prince and princess of Orange, and Mr. Fagel, knew surely what was the constitution in that country; and the reader has their sentiments, that it was contrary to the laws and customs of all Christian states, whether protestants or papists, to admit dissenters to a share in the government or public employments. And so true is this, that no Arminian in Holland is ever admitted into the magistracy; and the case is the same in Sweden, Denmark, the principalities and free towns of the empire, which profess the protestant religion. At Dantzic, as I am informed, three out of eighteen magistrates are allowed to be Calvinists, the rest being Lutherans; a proportion so small, that it will hardly make an exception to the general rule.

I have now laid before the reader the reasons inducing me to wish the continuance of those laws which the bishop has declared ought to be repealed. Whether his lordship judged right when he suggested that I could not be a well-wisher to these laws without being an approver of persecution, the world must judge from what I have now offered.

As to his lordship, I will beg leave to remind him of something which he ought to have considered himself before he had openly declared and called for a repeal of the test act. In the fifth of the Queen an act was made introductive to the union of the two kingdoms, intituled, "An Act for securing the Church of England as by law established." In which act it is provided, that an act 13 Elizabeth, intituled, "An Act for ministers of the church to be of sound religion;" and the "Act of Uniformity," 13 Charles II.—and "all other and singular acts of parliament, now in force for the establishment and preservation of the church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, shall remain, and be in full force for ever." This act is inserted verbatim in the act of union, and declared to be an "essential condition of the said union,"—an "essential and fundamental part of the—articles

and union." Since then all and singular acts, in force at the time of the union for the establishment and preservation of the church are made perpetual, his lordship should have considered whether the test act did not come within this description; and the rather because by an act of parliament 10 Annæ, cap. 2. it is declared concerning the corporation and test acts, that "both—were made for the security of the church of England as by law established." Now if these acts were, as it is declared by the legislature, made for the security of the church established, and if all such acts are fundamentals of the union, and to continue in force for ever, his lordship as a private writer, I presume, ought not to have called for a repeal. If this be permitted, what jealousies may not be fomented? What handle does this administer to men otherwise disposed than his lordship to break in on the like security which the kirk enjoys, whenever they have power and opportunity?

I speak this of his lordship as a private writer only: when the legislature set limits to their own authority, they must continue the judges of those limits; and it would be great presumption in me to pretend to say that this consideration does affect, or how it does affect, the supreme power; but there is at least so much appearance in it as to make it very improper for private men to give judgment in the case; which yet his lordship has done in the most express (and indeed most reproachful) terms, by openly calling for a repeal of the test act.

I shall transcribe the words of the union act relating to the security of the church of England, and so conclude this head.

Quinto Annæ, cap. 8. sect. 7. "And whereas it is reasonable and necessary that the true protestant religion professed and established by law in the church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, should be effectually and unalterably secured; be it enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and the commons in this present parliament assembled, and by authority of the same, that an act made in the thirteenth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, of famous memory, intituled, 'an act for ministers of the church to be of sound religion:' And also another act made in the thirteenth year of the reign of the late

King Charles II., intituled, 'an act for the uniformity of the public prayers and administration of sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies, and for establishing the form of making, ordaining, and consecrating bishops, priests, and deacons in the church of England,' (other than such clauses in the said acts, or either of them, as have been repealed or altered by any subsequent act or acts of parliament) and all and singular other acts of parliament now in force for the establishment and preservation of the church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, shall remain and be in full force for ever."

Sect. 8. "And be it farther enacted by the authority aforesaid, that after the demise of her Majesty (whom God long preserve!) that the sovereign next succeeding to her Majesty in the royal government of the kingdom of Great Britain, and so for ever hereafter, every king or queen succeeding or coming to the royal government of the kingdom of Great Britain, at his or her coronation, shall in the presence of all persons who shall be attending, assisting, or otherwise then and there present, take and subscribe an oath to maintain and preserve inviolably the said settlement of the church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, as by law established within the kingdoms of England and Ireland, the dominion of Wales, and town of Berwick on Tweed, and the territories thereunto belonging."

Sect. 11. "And it is hereby farther enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said act passed in this present session of parliament, intituled, 'an act for securing the church of England as by law established,' and all and every the matters and things therein contained: and also the said act of parliament of Scotland, intituled, 'an act for securing the protestant religion and presbyterian church government,' with the establishment in the said act contained, be, and shall for ever be held and adjudged to be, and observed as fundamental and essential conditions of the said union: and shall in all times coming be taken to be, and are hereby declared to be essential and fundamental parts of the said articles and union."

The second question is this: supposing it to be right to put offices of power and trust into the hands of such only as are well

affected to the ecclesiastical establishment, whether it be lawful to require of any man who is willing to accept such office, that he should communicate with the church established; and particularly that he should receive the sacrament according to the rites and usage of it in order to prove his communion with it.

It is here to be observed that the test act obliges no man to receive the sacrament. It may (and I doubt it too often does) prove a temptation to a man to do what otherwise he would not choose to do; but for such insincerity the receiver, and not the law-maker, is to answer. We ought not indeed to lay stumbling-blocks in the way of our brethren; but the legislature consider the receiving the sacrament according to the rites of the church of England not only as lawful, but as commendable in a Christian, and therefore they can in no sense be charged with tempting men to sin. But his lordship's objection is more general; he argues that religion ought not to be a civil test; in answer to which I told him, that religion is the test whenever an oath is required. His lordship in his reply would seem to deny this, and in order to it, has so confounded the terms of the question, that it is necessary to set them right before we go any farther.

1. Religion, considered in its first principle and foundation, is that sense and persuasion which men have of the being and power of God, and of the relation they stand in to him as creatures and subjects.

This sense is the very bond and obligation which tie men to God; and though in strictness of speech it may perhaps more properly be called the foundation of all religion than religion itself, yet the disposition which naturally arises from hence, and influences all religious acts and duties whatever, has intitled even the original sense by a common figure of speech to bear the title of religion.

2. The first and most immediate consequences from this sense are, that we ought to love, fear, and trust in God, as Creator and Governor. These are properly and strictly speaking religious acts of a rational mind.

3. The whole complex of man's bounden duty to God, deducible from this general sense, is properly called religion.

4. Any branch of religion, respecting immediately either God, ourselves, or our neighbor, may by a figure usual with all writers be termed religion: thus it is religion to love God, so also it is religion to love our neighbor.

5. All particular duties, as they regard God, may for the same reason be called religion.

6. The coming in of the gospel made no alteration in the essentials of religion. It is just as much religion now to love and fear God and to obey him, as it was before the publishing the gospel; and no more so. But it is to be observed that our blessed Lord has commanded the observation of some positive institutions, intended to be signs and memorials to Christians of the grace bestowed on them by God through Christ. These institutions are ordained for the sake and for the preservation of true Christian religion, and are called religion, not because they are in their own nature religious acts, but for the relation they have to religion through the institution and command of Christ Jesus, and to that truly religious disposition of mind with which they ought always to be performed.

From this account I would observe,

1. That to love, fear, and trust God as Governor of the universe, are the first and most essential duties of religion, and resulting immediately from the natural sense and disposition of a rational mind; that all particular duties flow from these; and consequently, that no particular duty can be called religion in a higher sense than these are so called.

2. That these essential duties are the religion on which an oath is founded.

The next thing to be considered is the meaning of the word test.

The word test is a relative term, and always respects something that is to be testified. And therefore a test, as it is applied to human affairs, denotes a sensible evidence naturally tending to prove the thing doubted of. I say naturally tending, because no human appointment can make any thing to be a sign of an inward disposition which is not naturally so: an oath is therefore a test of the witness's veracity, because it naturally implies (the religion of man supposed) the strongest obligation and disposition to speak truth.

The word civil added to test does not denote any thing that belongs to the test itself, or that enters into the nature of it; but signifies merely the end for which it is required, or the use that is made of it. The sacramental test is called a civil test, not because the act of receiving becomes a civil or political act by being made a test, but only because the end for which it is made a test relates to the civil state, and the use made of the test is political, respecting the government. So that in the sacramental test there is nothing civil or political, but as it is applied by the government; on the part of the receiver it continues to be a religious act without any mixture of politics in virtue of the law. When it is brought before the government, they consider the act of receiving according to the usage of the established church, only as implying the qualification which the state requires in all persons, who shall be in office, &c. In this sense then religion is made a civil test, that the magistrate is enabled from thence to draw a consequence which he applies to civil affairs.

To apply this to the two cases before us.

An oath is required of a witness as a test of his veracity. It is the act of a man considered as a religious creature; for take away the sense of religion, and there is no pretence for requiring an oath. Since then an oath has all its force from the religion of the man, it is the religion of a man alone that makes it a test; for whatever it is that makes it naturally signify what is intended or required to be signified by it, that it is which gives it the essential properties of a test. But it is the religion of the man alone that makes his oath naturally signify the veracity of his evidence in virtue of the strong obligation it puts him under to speak truth. It is evident then the religion of the man is the test whenever an oath is required; and religion here denotes the first and immediate duties arising from the knowlege of God and of ourselves, as they are explained, (Art. 2.) in the account of religion. For whoever takes an oath, does as it were pawn the love and fear of God which are in him, and all his trust and hope in God, for the truth and sincerity of his evidence or promise; and these internal principles are the ground and foundation of all religious acts whatever. No test can be founded on a higher degree of religion,

than this; no positive duty can imply a greater degree of religion than is contained in this general faith, in these first principles from which all duties flow.

His lordship has observed more than once that we are not bound by religion to take oaths; and in this he places the great difference between the test of an oath and the sacramental test; but his observation does not come up to the case; for an oath is that act of a man by which religion is made a test; and though the act itself be not commanded, yet the religion laid hold on by that act is commanded, unless his lordship thinks that we are under no command or obligation to love, to fear, to trust in God.

The true parallel stands thus:

We are obliged to believe in God, and to fear him, and to trust in him, in the virtue of the reason given us by God.

We are obliged to receive the sacrament in the church of Christ in obedience to an institution of Christ; and consequently we are supposed to be in communion with that visible part of the church with which we receive the sacrament.

When the magistrate requires an oath, he lays hold on the natural sense and obligation we are under to believe in and to fear God, and grounds the test on them.

When he requires the sacramental test, he lays hold of the obligation we are under to communicate with that church which we esteem to be a true part of the church of Christ, and grounds the test on it.

And the reader has it now fairly before him to judge how far religion is in both cases a civil test, and whether it be not at least as much so in the first case as in the latter.

But if it shall be allowed that religion has, by the common consent of nations, been made a test in civil matters, and consequently that his lordship's objection from the nature of religion in general is not good; yet it remains to be considered in particular, whether there be any thing in the institution of the sacrament that makes it unlawful for the government to use it as a test. And here it must be granted that if the statutes requiring the sacramental test have added to or taken from the institution of Christ, they are certainly unlawful; but if they

have done neither, his lordship has very unjustly charged them with perverting the end of the institution.

To draw a just consequence from seeing a man do an act injoined by Christ, is, I presume, no affront to the command of Christ: to argue from a man's obeying the gospel that he is a Christian, will hardly be taken for an abuse of the gospel: so in the present case, to conclude from a man's receiving the sacrament in the church of England, that he is in communion with the church of England, (which is all the use that the government makes of the sacrament considered as a test,) is surely as innocent a thing as any in the world. If the bishop can show that the laws now in force require any man to receive otherwise than a member of the church of England ought to receive when not called on by those laws, or with any view or purpose of heart contrary to the gospel, let the laws be condemned. I put the whole that I have to say in justification of them on this issue; only desiring his lordship not to charge the law with the hypocrisy and guilt of such as he knows despise the laws of God and man.

The word test, when applied to the sacrament, is a mere external denomination; it does not denote any thing belonging to the institution, or to the action of receiving, but merely the use that is made of it as an external sign. If the government take it to signify what it does naturally signify, they are guilty of no impiety; and I am at a loss to find the great wickedness in supposing that whoever receives the sacrament in the church of England is a member of that church. And therefore I am surprised to hear his lordship call this "debasing the most sacred thing in the world into a political tool and engine of state." These are very hard words; unless possibly they come within his lordship's rule, "that principles can neither give nor take affronts."

But perhaps his lordship may say that the fault lies in requiring men to receive the sacrament according to the rites of the church of England; but before he does say so, I hope he will consider that it is no great crime to require a man to do what his professed principles lead him to do. And therefore the legislature are blameless in requiring the mem-

bers of the church of England to receive according to the rites of their own church; and his lordship may know from hence that they intended to require it of no others; that when they found others did receive it in consequence of these laws, they put a stop to all temptations to such abuse of the law for the future, by the occasional bill. And even as to the members of the church of England, they are no more obliged by these laws to receive than they are to take a place; and if they think fit to take a place, yet so much time is allowed (that is, three months) for receiving the sacrament, that it must needs be their own fault if they are not well prepared for it. So that in all views, the legislature are guiltless of the profanation of the Lord's supper, with which they have been so warmly and so indecently charged.

But after all, it will be said that in fact many who receive on account of offices do it in a very indecent manner, and come very ill prepared to this so solemn a part of religious worship: *pudet hæc opprobria;* I am sorry there is so just cause of complaint in this respect. And in God's name let the ministers of the gospel speak to the consciences of their people; let them reprove their iniquity, and show them that there will be 'no profit in gaining the world, if they lose their own souls;' and if this will not do, let them turn away the open and notorious offenders from the Lord's table, and tell them they have 'neither part nor lot in this matter; for their hearts are not right in the sight of God.'

I know his lordship will think this to be a dangerous experiment; for he has a notion that the test act "forces clergymen to give the communion to every atheist or debauchee who may be named to any civil office; unless he chooses to be ruined for not doing it." I perceive his lordship's law is of his own making, as well as his divinity: the reader may look into the test act if he pleases; but if he looks till doomsday, he will find nothing in it to force any clergyman to give the sacrament to every one, much less to every atheist who may be named to a place. The test act leaves this matter just as it found it, subject to the rules and canons of the church; and the man who comes with a place to receive the sacrament, is in the same case as he who comes without one, and is liable to be re-

fused for the same reasons. If his lordship would have studied the constitutions of the church of England by law established, he might have known that the rubrics before the communion-service authorise the curate to repel all open notorious evil livers; all who "have done wrong to their neighbors by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended;" and, "those betwixt whom he perceiveth malice and hatred to reign —provided that within fourteen days he give notice to the ordinary," &c. He might have known too that these rubrics have the authority of an act of parliament, and in case of any dispute, are as good a rule to the judges in Westminster Hall as to the curate of the parish; and therefore if the curate does right according to these rules in the church, he can never suffer for so doing in Westminster Hall; and if he does wrong, he ought to suffer whether the person injuriously refused had a place or no.

His lordship, I suppose, may have heard in common talk that a person who loses a place by being refused the sacrament may have an action against the curate for damages; I have heard the same often: but I desire his lordship to take notice that there must be an injury done as well as a damage suffered, to intitle a man to an action; and therefore let a man suffer what damage he will by being refused, yet if he was not wrongfully refused, the law will give him no remedy. And whatever clergyman acts according to the rubric, which is a rule prescribed him as well by the law of the land as of the church, will be in no great danger of being judged to have acted injuriously.

Cases of this nature are properly triable in the ecclesiastical courts; but supposing that by reason of the temporal damage sustained by loss of a place, a man may have an action in the temporal courts, yet I presume that he would not be allowed to proceed on the base allegation that he was refused the sacrament; but he must aver that he was refused it unjustly, and without sufficient reason: and if on the trial it shall appear that the curate did refuse him, but that he did it justly and with sufficient reason, the complainer will be intitled to no remedy. The rubrics and canons of the church must be in that case the rule to judge by; and if the minister has followed the rubrics

and canons, he will be justified; if he has not, neither his lordship nor I are concerned to inquire what will become of him.

I may venture then to tell his lordship (and I have some ground for my assurance) that the test act forces no clergyman to give the sacrament to atheists and debauchees, or any other offenders, if they be openly and notoriously such; if they are such only in secret, they are out of the question; for no clergyman's conscience can be burdened by admitting an unknown offender to the sacrament.

Should any clergyman, forgetting his duty, refuse a parishioner the sacrament out of passion or prejudice, or with any other sinister view, he must thank himself for what he shall suffer on that account; and he will deserve to suffer, whether his parishioner had a place or had not one. But if he proceeds with discretion and charity, and according to the rules prescribed him by authority, he has as little to fear from a man with a place as from a man without one; and if he be unjustly and vexatiously sued for doing his duty, the law will give him costs.

But it may be said perhaps, that it is enough to ruin a poor clergyman (and many such there are) to justify what he does well by the method of law. If this be true, the more is the pity; but then I would have it observed that this difficulty does not arise from the test act, and therefore it is not chargeable on it; but it arises from the course of our legal proceedings, and is common to all cases. A clergyman may be ruined (and many a one has been) by suing for his just dues of tithes and offerings; and yet methinks it would be an injudicious complaint to quarrel with the laws by which the dues are claimed on this account. If his lordship can find a just and adequate remedy for this difficulty, he will merit the thanks of the clergy; but it is absurd to charge that as the fault of one law which is common to all.

I know but of one difficulty more that can be made in this matter, which is this: it may be alleged that a curate may have sufficient reason to himself to repel a man from the communion, and yet it may be hard for him to make legal evidence, against the man of the crime for which he refuses him. In answer to which, I say that a curate of a parish is bound to

proceed by the rules prescribed him by the church; and he cannot be answerable for not doing what the church has given him no authority to do. It is not every private sin that a man commits that ought to exclude him from the sacrament, though it should accidentally come to the curate's knowlege. It is a proper ground for private admonition; but until it becomes an offence to the congregation, it does not necessarily call for open censure. Of the three cases mentioned in the rubric, two of them require a notoriety of fact; and the third is so limited, that it must become notorious before a man can be excluded for it; for though the curate may repel those betwixt whom he perceiveth malice to reign, yet if the parties declare themselves to be in mutual charity, they shall be admitted; or if one declares himself content to forgive, &c. he shall be admitted. And if any man on admonition shall refuse these conditions, I think his want of charity will be notorious. Since then no curate is obliged in duty to repel a man from the sacrament but for offences open and notorious, he will always have it in his power either to admit a man consistently with his own obligations, or to make clear proof of the reasons for which he repels him.

But after all, the great cause of these disorders is the neglect of the constitutions and rules of the church. If no curate would admit any to the sacrament but his own parishioners,* and would require of them to give him due notice of their intentions to receive,† many of the abuses and irreverencies now justly complained of would be prevented; notorious offenders would not offer themselves where they are well known; nor would any man dare to approach the Lord's table indecently when he knew himself to be under the observation of curate and congregation; whereas strangers who slip into congregations where nobody knows them, if they have no religion, it is no wonder that sometimes they have no decency. I know very well that the neglect of these good orders has been suffered so long, that private curates can hardly hope to succeed in attempting to restore them; but it is proper matter of consideration for our superiors, and to them I submit it.

* Canon 28. † Rubric before Communion.

The result of his lordship's reasoning affords us another objection against the test act: namely, that it is a worldly motive "to induce Christians to the same one certain profession in religious matters, and to the same one certain form of words and ceremonies in public worship." I would to God it had produced this effect! I should rejoice (however his lordship complains) to see the test act grow useless and out of date by the general conformity of the people of this nation. But in the mean while I must tell his lordship that the act was made for no such purpose; the intent was to keep dissenters out of the state, not to force them into the church; which may appear in part from hence, that their meetings were tolerated by the very act, in the first of William and Mary, which expressly extends the test to them.

But whatever the intent was, it may be said, the effect is that men are tempted by this act to outward conformity, and are made hypocrites. I allow it to be so; and what then? Why, hypocrisy is a very evil thing, and no man ought to have a temptation to it laid in his way. True still; and his lordship might know that to prevent this was one reason of the occasional bill; but though all such hypocrisy cannot be prevented, yet consider—are they who encourage virtue and true religion answerable for the hypocrisy of those who will pretend to virtue and religion in order to share in the encouragement? If they are, then it is in itself a wicked thing to encourage virtue and true religion; and a father is a wicked man who rewards one son for doing well, because thereby he may possibly tempt another to make a show of doing well. A gentleman in the country who shows some mark of favor to his poor neighbors who religiously attend the public service of God, is really by so doing drawing on himself the wrath of God, by laying a temptation before others to make an appearance of being better than really they are. If these consequences are good, then I am sure that "the worship of God and the neglect of it, religion and irreligion, ought to be set on an equal foot in this world:" *but if they are false, his lordship's objection against the test has no weight in it, and it will be lawful to do right notwithstanding that some perhaps may make a wrong use of our so doing. But this general reason is calculated to serve*

more purposes than one; and there will be occasion some time or other to recal it to examination. In the meanwhile I shall take leave of this part of the argument, not intending (without very good reason) to be drawn into it again; for although I have, for the sake of religion and of this Christian church, both which (as I still conceive) must suffer by his lordship's principles, been content to enter into a controversy, yet I do not design that it shall grow to be the employment of my life. His lordship has by prescription a right to the last word in every controversy; and I am willing he should have it in this.

If there be reason in what I have offered, it will prevail with reasonable men; if there be not, I am not so unreasonable as to desire it should.

PART II.

I come now to consider what his lordship has offered to show, how little religion there is in an oath compared to the religion of the sacrament. The bishop has found a great difference between these two cases, and introduces it by five observations, which are intended to remove the two cases out of sight; in order, I suppose, to enable the reader the better to judge of their difference.

1. The two first observations give a very good account of himself, to which I have nothing to say.

2. The third observation begins with acknowleging the lawfulness of oaths, and so much is clear gain; but it goes on to affirm that they are not made use of on the principles of religion, properly so called: but that "the actual use of oaths in human society is intirely founded on the political principles of reason, and the common good of mankind, with respect to their civil concerns only," &c.

His lordship's accuracy here is much to be observed: he does not say an oath is founded on political reasons, and respects civil concerns only, but that the actual use of an oath is so founded, &c.; for certain it is that an oath, to one who believes a future judgment, respects his spiritual concerns; which are as much endangered by a deceitful oath as by an hypocritical use of the sacrament. If his lordship thinks otherwise, I desire him to

show that an offence against the first principles of natural religion is a less crime than an offence against a positive institution.

With the like accuracy his lordship affirms that "the actual use of oaths in human societies respects civil concerns only." His lordship, you see, does not affirm that the actual use of oaths respects civil concerns only; and therefore he says, the actual use of oaths in human societies, &c. that is, when oaths are used to a civil purpose only, then they respect civil concerns only. It is his lordship's doctrine that human societies are founded only for civil purposes, and have nothing to do with religion; and therefore for him to say that the actual use of oaths in human societies respects civil concerns only, can afford nothing but this self-evident proposition—that when oaths respect civil concerns only, then they do respect civil concerns only.

As to the natural use of oaths, it extends itself to all matters where truth and veracity are concerned. Whatever may be affirmed or promised is capable of being confirmed by an oath. His lordship promised to do many things when he was consecrated, (which do not respect civil concerns;) had he been called on to confirm the promise by an oath, he would hardly have said that an oath was not applicable to such purposes; and he knows that in many colleges the members do swear that they will be guided by the holy Scripture, and not prefer any human authority before it; and yet colleges are human societies, though they do thus actually use an oath for purposes not only civil.

In the Old Testament and the New, God himself is represented as confirming his promises by an oath in matters of all others the most spiritual; and particularly as appointing Christ, by an oath, to be a priest after the order of Melchisedec. Now this ascribing an oath to God in holy Scripture, sufficiently proves that an oath in its own nature is not confined to civil concerns only. And as God swears to his people, so his lordship may find the people under the law frequently taking a solemn oath to him 'to walk in his laws:' which related, as I suppose will be allowed, to more than civil concerns only. And therefore when his lordship affirms that were it not for the use of oaths "in civil concerns only, they would be forbidden by religion in all cases, as they are in some;" his affirmation is

contrary to reason, experience, and the examples of holy writ. And what are the some cases in which religion forbids oaths? Why truly profane and common swearing is forbidden, that is, oaths are forbidden where there is not a case which requires the use of them, and this his lordship calls forbidding them in some cases; and the prohibition of Scripture, which was plainly intended to preserve a regard to the sacredness of an oath, is made an objection by the bishop against the religion of it.

His lordship observes farther, that the use of oaths is intirely founded on the political principles of reason and the common good of mankind. What then? So are many others the most essential duties of religion; for man being made by God for society, he is put under such religious obligations to God as tend to the benefit of it; and if I understand what his lordship means by political principles of reason, they and those of religion lead to the same conclusion; and therefore the use of an oath being founded on political principles, &c. will not prove that an oath is not a religious act. For consider, it is a duty to love one another; and "the actual practice of this duty is founded in political principles of reason, and the common good of mankind;" and yet, I hope, it is not for that less a part of our religion to love one another: nay, whatever practice is contrary to the common good of mankind cannot flow from religion; and therefore to assert that the use of oaths is founded in the political principles of reason and common good of mankind, in order to show how little of religion they have in them, is an argument so intirely his lordship's own, that I know nobody who will be ambitious to share the honor of it with him.

His lordship concludes this observation with these words: "and it is one thing I think for a practice not to contradict the principles of religion, and another thing to be performed on the principles of it;" giving us to understand that it is his opinion that the practice of oaths does not contradict religion, but that it is not performed on the principles of it.

I am sorry the heat of controversy should draw from the bishop such a doctrine; for if any thing be certain it is this, that the use of oaths is founded, and the practice is performed on the principles of religion; for take away the principles of religion, and there can be no use of oaths. It will be allowed that

to believe the being of a God is a principle of religion; take away this, and no one would be so stupid as to require an oath. The reason Mr. Lock gives, as I remember, for not tolerating atheists in civil societies is this; that atheists having no religion cannot give the security for performing of contracts, on which all societies are founded; and if a man's promise cannot be taken but on the principles of religion, much less can his oath, which is more immediately founded in them; and although it be not a standing and necessary part of religion to take oaths, (and the reason is because there is no constant occasion for taking them,) yet the religious observation of oaths, taken as occasion requires, is commanded in the law of God: Numbers xxx. 2.

If his lordship means by an oath's not being performed on the principles of religion, that it is not a part of a man's religion to take an oath, but that he may perform the duties of religion though he never takes an oath, it is in one sense true; in another not so. It is true that no man is obliged from the internal principles of religion to take an oath; but the intervention of a lawful command requiring his oath, may make it become his duty to take it. If the people of Israel had refused to swear to the covenant, Deut. xxix. 12. which God made with them, and to walk in his laws, when duly called to it, it had been a breach of duty; so in the case of the sacrament, it is no part of religion from the internal principles of religion; but it is made so by the intervention of a lawful command. But what is this to our purpose? The question is, whether religion be not the test whenever an oath is taken: how is this answered by saying that religion does not oblige men to take an oath merely for the sake of taking it? If whenever they do take it, religion is the test, then his lordship must find some other argument against the sacramental test besides this, that religion ought not to be made a civil test.

3. The fourth observation relates to what I had said, intimating that the bishop could not name the people who had not used oaths. His lordship in answer refers to the quakers: a worthy people! I used the word people as it signifies a body of men of the same country under the same government; his lordship, rather than want an answer, chose to misunderstand

the word; and the quakers are called forth to bear their testimony against the common sense of all nations to which the appeal was made, and yet even the quakers dispute rather the name than the thing; for their solemn affirmation is indeed an oath, and agrees to the definition given by Cicero, and the best writers after him, of an oath, that it is *religiosa affirmatio*. If a modern historian reports rightly, the bishop might have found a better instance; for it is recorded of the people of Peru, that an oath was not in use among them; but that they required only a simple promise of the parties to tell the truth to the Inca or king.

The latter part of this fourth observation has this peculiar beauty in it, that it contradicts the grounds laid down in the third. There we are taught that the use of an oath is intirely founded on political principles of reason; here we are told that the quakers scruple the use of an oath "through the misunderstanding of a few texts, and the not considering them with respect to the principles of natural religion and of human society." If considering the texts with respect to the principles of natural religion would have eased their scruples, it must be because oaths are founded on the principles of natural religion; and if so, then political principles are not the only ground on which they stand; unless by political principles the bishop meant principles of natural religion, and intended to build the difference these observations are to introduce on a mere variety of sounds.

4. The fifth observation is spent intirely in misrepresenting the state of the controversy, and was for that reason, I suppose, ordered to bring up the rear, and to stand close by the reader, whilst his lordship showed the difference between the cases under consideration.

"To argue against me," says the bishop, "as if I had maintained it to be impious to require it, that is, the same test of a man's honesty that is required in every trivial cause, namely, to require an oath of a man when he is admitted to a place of trust, is I confess in a peculiar manner unaccountable, when I had not said one word about it:" that is, about an oath. I desire the reader's patience whilst I produce the words which gave occasion to this.

"There is not a cause, be it never so trivial, tried in Westminster-hall, but religion (observe) is made a civil test; and is it right, my lord, to require this test (that is, of religion) of a man's honesty in a five shilling cause; and is it impious to require it when he is admitted to a place of trust in the government?" His lordship would have the reader suppose from hence that I charge him with maintaining that it is impious to require an oath of a man when he is admitted, &c. The truth is so far otherwise, that the argument supposes his lordship not to charge impiety on requiring an oath as a test of honesty. But his lordship had, and does maintain that it is impious to require the sacramental test; and he gave this reason for it, that it was making religion a civil test. The question then was whether religion might be a civil test. I showed him a case (which I supposed him to allow) in which religion was a civil test, and that in cases of little concern; and then asked him, is it impious to require it, (not an oath, as his lordship says; but religion as a civil test,) when a man is admitted to a place of trust, &c. And now let the reader judge how justly the bishop complains.

The bishop goes on: "it is observable that this worthy person is not here endeavoring to show that I have advanced a general principle which must be false, because it tends to this consequence, that all oaths are unlawful in courts of judicature; but in effect charges me with pretending to great discoveries, against the constant usage of oaths by mankind, &c. To what purpose he himself best knows."

The bishop surely penned this in confidence that he should never more hear of it; for the very contrary to what the bishop here asserts is the truth of the case. The bishop built his objection against the sacramental test on this principle, that religion ought not to be a civil test; I told him in answer, that religion was the test whenever an oath was required; the use of which was allowed of and practised every where. The argument then is evidently this; that principle which proves the use of an oath to be unlawful is false, and contrary to the sense of mankind.

But this principle, that religion ought not to be a civil test, proves the use of oaths to be unlawful.

This is what the bishop affirms I did not endeavor to show; this is what I affirm I did endeavor to show; and he that has eyes to see, let him see.

The cause being now sufficiently puzzled, and the reader prepared by having his notions darkened, the differences which his lordship has found in the two cases are permitted to make their appearance. The first remarkable thing that occurs is the great fairness with which the bishop relates the point under debate; he proposes to show that "no argument can be drawn from the allowed use of oaths to the abuse of a sacred institution."

I presume this passage could hardly be intended to make any part of the appearance of charity, which his lordship has told me he is resolved to maintain. But I come to his argument, which is branched out into five heads; all which are to show how little religion is concerned in the case of oaths, compared to the great concern it has in the sacramental test.

The first head is introduced by these words:

1. An oath "is called religion only as it is founded on the supposition of believing in God, under the notion of an avenger," &c. What his lordship means by the word *only* in this passage I cannot understand, unless his aim be plainly to lessen the religion of an oath, and to that purpose *only* be added. His sense then is this: there is so little religion in an oath, that there would be no religion at all were it not for this *only* that it is founded, &c. If this be a diminution of the religion of an oath, I doubt there can be but little religion in the world; for I will venture to affirm of all religious acts and duties whatever, that they are a religion *only* as they are ultimately founded in faith towards God as governor of the world. If his lordship should affirm that it is day-light *only* because the sun shines, the philosophy of this assertion would answer the divinity of the other.

2. His lordship adds: "it (that is, an oath) does not in its own nature extend so far as to suppose the person to believe a future state; but only that there is a being, or perhaps many beings who will pursue him with vengeance if he be perjured." Had not the bishop elsewhere explained his notion of religion, this objection against the religion of an oath could not have

been understood. But his lordship has declared that "the belief (of future rewards and punishments) is that alone which renders our best actions religion;" and when "they do not flow from hence, they cease to be religion." What difference there may be in men's minds and in their apprehensions about the same thing, I cannot say; but for myself this I say, that this doctrine appears to me to be very pernicious and destructive of true religion. All rewards and punishments suppose a duty: had not men therefore a sense of religion, and of the duties of it, they could have no sense of rewards and punishments on the account of religion; and consequently the duties of religion are the same, whether considered with or without the sanctions. To make then the essence of religion to consist merely in the regard had to the views of a future state, is to make the sanction of the law antecedent to the law itself.

2. On the bishop's state of the case, religion is not founded in the relation between God and man, or in the sense of duty arising from thence, but in pure selfishness; we are religious not out of a sense that we ought to serve God, but out of a sense that we ought to serve ourselves. There is no natural beauty in religion that we should desire it, no comeliness in the service of God to move us; but all religion is the result of hope and fear for ourselves, and we obey God not because it is our duty, but because our hopes or our fears constrain us so to do. This doctrine is in its proper place, when it appears in the school of Epicurus, and I can bear the poet's saying,

Primus in orbe Deos fecit timor;

but I am surprised and ashamed to hear a Christian bishop assert, "that the practice of what is called virtue and charity is not truly religion, unless it be founded on and guided by the motives of another world." Whereas the practice of virtue and charity founded on a sense of duty to God, is most certainly true religion: our hopes and fears do not make it religion; for were it not in itself religion, our hopes and fears would have as little to do with it as they now have with the most indifferent actions of our life. Christians, who have been

3. I have heard of many good

troubled in mind out of an apprehension that they have been too much moved by hope and fear; and that the sense of their duty has had too little influence on their actions: but now it seems another care must take place, and we are to fear lest any thing but hopes and fears have been the motives to our obedience; since, in his lordship's judgment, our best actions cease to be religion if they flow from any principles but the hopes and fears of futurity.

4. That rewards and punishments are proper motives to keep us to our duty is very certain; but that there should be *no* religion, or that it should be impossible to perform any religious duty without their immediate influence, is what religion *itself* must ever disown. It is the imperfection of our condition that makes it necessary to apply to our hopes and fears; but were we in such a perfect state that there was nothing left to fear or to hope for, yet surely we could not cease to be religious *without* forgetting God and ourselves. And I trust that when things future shall become things present, and the blessed of God shall enter on a glorious immortality, when such hopes and fears shall be at an end; that then the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect shall for ever serve, worship, and adore their Maker, and that the security and perfection of their state shall not put an end to their religion.

Yet after all, allowing his lordship's notion of religion's being built on the hopes and fears of futurity, certain it is that a Christian's oath lays hold even on those hopes and fears; and therefore religion (even in this sense) is the test when a Christian swears; and consequently no Christian ought to be put to his oath, if the bishop's principle be true, that religion ought not to be a civil test.

After these deductions made from the religion of an oath, his lordship goes on to others, and tells us that an oath supposes a being, or perhaps many beings, who will pursue perjury with vengeance.

In answer to which it is sufficient to say that a Christian's oath is founded on the belief of one God; and therefore in this respect the religion of a Christian's oath is not diminished. If therefore a Christian may lawfully swear in civil matters, then religion may lawfully be made a civil test. But to what

purpose does his lordship mention the many beings or deities, with regard to whom the heathens took oaths: will this take any thing from the religion of an oath? If every thing must lose the name of religion which was once corrupted in the heathen world, I doubt we shall have little left; and the bishop may, whenever he pleases, show that faith, charity, &c. were once founded in the belief of many beings as well as the use of oaths.

His lordship adds: "but whether the punishment shall be in this world or in another, does not enter into the essence of the matter:" that is, of an oath. Yes, just as much as it does into the essence of charity or faith; for those who believe that God will punish perjury only in this world, believe the same with respect to all other wickedness. And therefore this observation belongs no more to an oath than to every other religious act. This consideration, properly speaking, does not enter into the essence of religion; and therefore there may be religion without it, and yet it (that is, the belief that perjury will be punished in another world) is of the essence of every Christian's oath.

His lordship indeed has placed (as we have seen) the essence of religion in the influence of future rewards and punishments; but it is hard to be constant to error, and therefore his lordship himself has solved this difficulty of his own proposing. "If God himself has threatened temporal judgments, the being moved by these, as they come from God, is still an act of faith in him." And I hope an act of faith in God is a religious act; and then there may be religion, by his lordship's confession, which is not founded on the only motive of future rewards and punishments.

The religion of an oath being now brought low, the bishop goes on to magnify the religion of the sacrament. "On the other side, the holy sacrament is called religion, as it is part of the religious worship in the congregations of Christians." An oath he allows to be founded in the belief of God, as an avenger. *And I will venture* to tell the bishop in few words, that to believe *in* God, and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him, *&c. is as essential* to religion as any positive institution (*and such is the sacrament*) of the gospel can be.

But what does this argument amount to? Let us try it. "The sacrament is part of the religious worship in the congregations of Christians." An oath is not a part of such worship: *ergo*, there is little religion in an oath, and a great deal in the sacrament. Now if this argument be true, it must be so in virtue of this principle; that nothing is strictly and properly religion that is not part of the religious worship in the congregations of Christians. And if this principle be true, then St. James's account of true religion is false: he affirms that 'to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction is pure and undefiled religion before God;' but we all know that such visits are not paid in the congregation as part of our religious worship; and therefore by the bishop's rule there is no religion, strictly and properly speaking, in them.

The bishop's second head turns on this: "that an oath is not appointed by God; it is no command among the commands of religion—whereas the eucharist is the positive institution of Christ, and the celebration of it his command to his disciples."

All this is founded on mistake, and the bishop is disproving what was never asserted. I had said that religion is the test whenever an oath is required; in answer to which his lordship says that an oath is required by men, and not made necessary by a command of God. Supposing all this true, what is it to me? The question is, whether religion be made a test when an oath is required; let who will require it or command it, it is nothing to the purpose.

But an oath, says his lordship, is not religion. Suppose this too; yet it is the act of a man, by which his religion is made the test of his veracity in matters both civil and religious. He that takes an oath pawns all his faith, hope, and trust in God for the truth of what he delivers. This is the religion which an oath lays hold of; and if his lordship can show that faith, hope, and trust in God, are human appointments and contrivances, he may then set the religion of the eucharist as much above them as he pleases. In the meantime I would recommend it to his care not to weaken the foundations of religion; which once subverted, all institutions for preserving religion, as well divine as human, must fall to the ground.

And if his lordship shall ever think fit to enter into this ar-

gument again, I wish him to consider how the case stood under the Old Testament, before he repeats his assertion that an oath is no command among the commands of religion. Out of many texts to this purpose, I will quote but two. In Deut. vi. 13. we find this positive command, 'Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.' And in Isaiah xlv. 23. we read these words of God: 'I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return; that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear:' where the reader may observe that the solemn worship of God, and solemn swearing by his name, are both joined together as acts of religion by God himself, though his lordship says expressly, an oath is very improperly called religion.

His lordship begins his third head with asserting that an oath was contrived for the service of human life in this world. Contrived by whom? By men, I suppose, he means. An oath indeed is appointed or required by men in many cases; but that it is a human contrivance is his lordship's discovery. A test of an inward disposition cannot be contrived, because nothing can be such a test that does not naturally signify the thing required to be signified; and therefore if an oath does not in its own nature signify a disposition and obligation to speak truth, and to perform covenants, no contrivance can ever give it such signification.

But however, let it be a contrivance; still it was a contrivance to make religion a test, and his lordship allows it to be a lawful contrivance; and the consequence must be, that religion may lawfully be made a civil test, which is the thing I affirmed, and the thing his lordship denied.

2. It is affirmed that the end of an oath is wholly secular and worldly. I have already showed his lordship that this observation is ill grounded, and have given instances of the application of an oath in cases that are not secular and worldly. What I have now to add is, that supposing it true, it is nothing to the purpose. Religion, say I, is made a civil test when an oath is required. An oath, says his lordship, is confined to cases that are secular and worldly. And what then? Need we contend about this? *If religion* is the test when an oath is required;

and an oath be confined to civil matters, it follows very strongly that religion is a civil test whenever an oath is required. Yet, says his lordship, here lies the difference; the sacrament was not instituted for the purposes of this life. To which I answer, that it was as much instituted for the purposes of this life as faith and hope in God, since this faith and hope are principally intended to be preserved by it. And these are the religion on which an oath is founded; and therefore there is no difference in this respect between the religion which is the test in one case, and that in the other. As to what his lordship here adds about the perverting the sacrament, and turning it from its original design, it has been already considered; and all that appears is, that his lordship has no distinct notion of this matter, and seems to know as little of the law in this point, as he tells us he does in the case of the supremacy. And as there is no turning aside the institution of Christ to purposes of this life by any law or statute relating to the test, so this whole third head is built on a mistake in point of fact, on supposition that the law has done what it never attempted to do.

The fourth head has nothing to do with the question before us; it has no relation to the religion that is made the test, either in one case or the other; but to the use made of the test itself, which is quite another matter. The bishop says an oath is not an instrument of partiality, but of justice, which may or may not be true, as the case happens. He affirms also, that the sacramental test is the means of partiality; which I have shown not to be true in the present case. But it is possible that religion may be made a test in order to serve an ill purpose; and yet there may be no ground to affirm with his lordship that religion ought not to be made a civil test. When a highwayman makes you swear not to prosecute him or discover him, the oath is very ill applied, and to the obstruction of justice; and yet it would be ridiculous to argue from hence against the nature of the test required in an oath in all cases whatever. So in the other case, supposing the sacramental test to be ill applied in one instance, what is that towards proving that the sacrament is abused whenever it is made a test, because religion must not be a civil test.

If all that his lordship means is, that he dislikes the purposes intended to be served by the sacramental test, let him argue his political case on political reasons, and let religion be left out, and not brought in only to make the show, when something else in reality lies at the bottom.

The fifth head is a long one; but to make amends for its length, it has the less of substance. His lordship begins with observing, "that few are excluded from the use of oaths;" and in the other part of the comparison complains that the holy sacrament is made "the instrument of excluding many Christians and protestants from—civil offices." Here the comparison is lame; the parts of it are not suited to one another: "few are excluded from the use of oaths;" the other part of the comparison then should be, "but many are excluded the use of the sacrament." Which is not true; for the test act excludes none who are willing to take it; so far from it, that his lordship complains that it tempts many to take it against their judgment. If we try the comparison the other way, and begin with what his lordship says of the sacrament first, that "it is an instrument of excluding Christians and protestants from—offices," then the difference which the bishop endeavors to show between the test of an oath and of the sacrament, by thus comparing them together, requires that it should be denied of an oath, that "it is the instrument of excluding Christians and protestants—from offices." But neither is this true; for the oath of supremacy excludes many Christians, the oath of allegiance many protestants, from civil offices. So that in whatever view you take it, this comparison will yield nothing to the bishop's purpose.

But allowing the bishop all this, yet his main point is not advanced: for if few are excluded from the use of oaths, and if many are excluded from offices by the sacramental test, yet it will not follow that religion is not the test in both cases; or that there is less religion in an oath than in the sacrament. Nay, the very contrary follows from the bishop's own argument in this place: the reason why few are excluded the use of an oath, is, as his lordship tells us, "because to be allowed to take an oath is the right of all who profess to

believe a Providence." But the sacrament none but Christians can take; and now, reader, judge of his lordship's argument: thus it stands:—

An oath is founded on that principle and belief which is common to all men who have any religion: the sacrament is founded on a principle and belief which none but Christians have: therefore there is less religion in an oath than in the sacrament. Whereas it must needs be that those principles of religion (such as the belief of a God and of his providence) which are common to all religious profession, and without which no religion could be professed, are as properly and strictly religion as any principles can be, and the obligations arising from them make strictly religious duties.

The five observations and the five heads of difference being thus displayed, his lordship collects all his own mistakes, and calls them, "the argument drawn from the use of oaths." He is pleased to give us in about seven lines five properties of an oath; every one of which is either false or nothing to the present purpose, as I have distinctly shown. All therefore that I have to say to the argument dressed up by his lordship, is this, that I had no hand in it; it is not the argument from the use of an oath, as I urged it: but it is his lordship's *own* intirely; and if he is pleased with it, I have no inclination to disturb his enjoyment. This way of putting arguments and propositions on an adversary is an art peculiar to his lordship; it may be a good cover for a bad cause, but can never be a proper defence of a good one. The conclusion of his lordship's answer is all spent in such misrepresentations; which shows plainly to every intelligent reader where his lordship places the greatest strength of his cause.

But give me leave here to wonder that a Christian bishop should take so much pains to undervalue the religion and sanctity of an oath, which the very heathens had in the greatest veneration: the Egyptians punished perjury with death, as including two the greatest crimes, impiety towards the gods, and a subversion of the strongest foundation for trust between men.

Look into Grotius, Sanderson, Puffendorf; they all define

an oath to be a solemn religious assertion; and Puffendorf expressly says, "recte juramentis summa religio tribuitur."* Sanderson more fully: "quod autem (juramentum) sit actus religiosus: constat primo ex auctoritate scripturæ, Deut. vi. 13. ubi Moses ita populum alloquitur, 'Dominum Deum tuum timebis, et ipsi servies, et per nomen ejus jurabis.' Ex quo loco concludunt uno ore scholastici, juramentum esse actum cultus (ut illi vocant) latriæ, i. e. cultus sacri soli Deo debiti. Constat secundo ex consensu omnium populorum, apud quos, etsi unius naturæ lumine ducerentur, sanctissima semper est habita juramenti religio; usque adeo ut ipsa sanctitatis, religionis, aliaque his cognata vocabula apud rerum gentilium scriptores vix ulla alia in re frequentius usurpata occurrant, quam in hac materia juramentorum: et quum plurima ipsis alia sacra haberentur, jurijurando tamen soli, non alia de causa quam quod inter tot sacra sacerrimum quodammodo esset, peculiari quodam jure sacramenti nomen remansit. Constat tertio ex evidentissima ratione: quia juramentum tendit in honorem Dei; per agnitionem veritatis, scientiæ justitiæ, et potentiæ divinæ." You see how this great man asserts the religion of an oath from the authority of Scripture, the consent of all people, and the evidence of reason; but all this could not restrain his lordship from writing down the religion of oaths; and for this only reason, because it stood in his way; a reason which has often carried his lordship into great extremes. I remember once, when he was urged (in a dispute about government) with the example of our blessed Saviour's suffering as applied by St. Peter, he made no scruple to affirm, "that the example of our Lord is much more peculiarly fit to be urged to slaves than to subjects:"† a doctrine which will make the ears of a Christian tingle, and ought to make him read with caution a writer so fond of his own notions as to take such steps to defend them.

* De Jure Naturæ, p. 332. Amst. 1704.

† Answer to Dr. Atterbury, p. 65.

POSTSCRIPT.

SINCE the second edition has been in the press, I received the following remark from a very worthy friend in the country: it relates to a fact which does not affect the merits of the cause; but I am willing to rectify any mistake, and therefore think fit to add the following remark in the words of my friend.

"As to what you say, at p. 58.* that it cannot be suggested that King William consented to as much as he could obtain from his parliament, &c. Dr. Calamy, at p. 439 of his abridgment of Baxter's Life, writes thus—'His Majesty (King William) in one of his speeches to the two Houses (in the year 1689, and before the passing the act of indulgence, as he has placed it) told them he hoped they would leave room for the admission of all protestants that were willing and able to serve him, which was a thing would tend to the better uniting themselves, and the strengthening them against their common adversaries. Pursuant hereto, when the act for abrogating of the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and appointing other oaths, was read a second time in the House of Lords, a clause was ordered to be brought in, to take away the necessity of receiving the sacrament to make a man capable of having an office. Such a clause being after reported to the House, was rejected by a great majority.'

"After this he says, at p. 440. 'Another clause was inserted by the court party in the aforesaid bill, by which it was provided that any man should be sufficiently qualified for any office, employment, or place of trust, who within a year before or after his admission or entrance thereinto, did receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, either according to the usage of the church of England, or in any other protestant congre-

* P. 460.

gation, and could produce a certificate under the hands of the minister and two other credible persons, members of such a protestant congregation. The question being put, whether this clause should be made part of the bill, it passed in the negative.'

"From these two passages it seems to appear that King William did what he could at his accession to the crown and after, to have exempted the dissenters from the test, or at least from the taking it in the church of England. It is also very plain that they would not refuse to take it (for offices) in their own congregations, if they could gain that point; and yet that practice would be liable to all Bishop Hoadley's objections. They never made the least objection against the naturalisation act, when it was in force; which required foreign protestants to receive the sacrament in any protestant congregation; notwithstanding what Mr. Peirce writes, whose words I will beg leave to transcribe; for perhaps you have not the book by you. 'The parliament did never design to guard against the dissenters by the test act, but only against the papists; however the act has been since basely abused. For though it is true those who first devised the act used not to attend our assemblies, yet it is well known they were favorers of the dissenters, and friends to our civil liberties. The law itself has been censured by dissenters and churchmen as unjust and ungodly; and if our adversaries had any regard to the honor of Christianity, they would long ago have earnestly solicited the repeal of it, &c.'" *

* Vindication of the Dissenters, p. 284. Part. i.—a book which gives the true spirit and principles of the dissenters.

END OF VOL. IV.

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